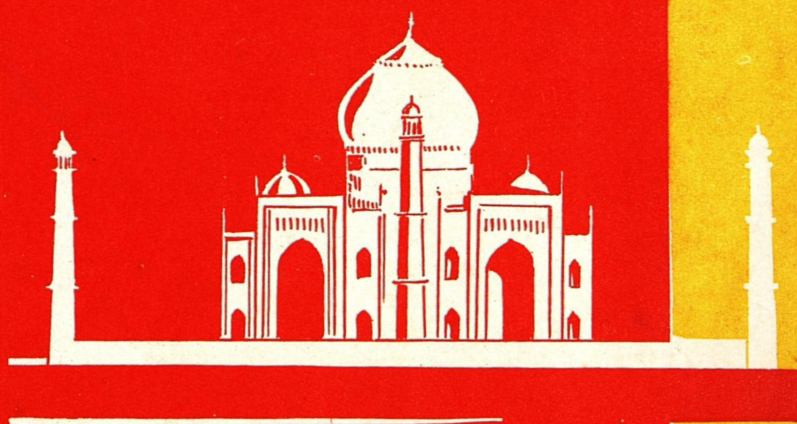
HISTORY

HIGHER SECONDARY – FIRST YEAR





TAMILNADU TEXTBOOK SOCIETY

HISTORY

(INDIAN CIVILIZATION)

Vol. I & II

Higher Secondary—First Year

Untouchability is a sin
Untouchability is a crime
Untouchability is inhuman



Tamil Nadu Textbook Society
MADRAS

Revised Edition—1982

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Price: Rs. 3-90

This book has been printed on concessional paper of 60 G. S. M. substance made available by the Government of India.

Printed at:
BHAGAT PRINTERS, MADRAS-600 016

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INTRODUCTION

According to Professor Arnold Toynbee, perhaps the greatest authority on Civilization, the four essentials for a civilized society are government, an ethical code, progress in art and a degree of material prosperity. Judged by this test, India has been a civilized country from the dim dawn of History. Her civilisation goes back to the days of Mohenjodaro and Harappa in the 4th millennium B. C. Indian civilization has not remained static; it has grown with the centuries, drawing within itself various elements, at different periods. It has adopted alien ideas and at the same time it has contributed to other civilisations. Indian civilization has retained its essential Indian character in spite of some foreign elements; it is distinctive for its antiquity and continuity.

The origins of Indian Civilization are traced to the period of the Indus Valley Civilization, namely fourth millennium B.C. During the second millennium B.C. the Aryans migrated to India laying the foundation of Vedic Civilization. There was a synthesis between the new Aryan Culture and the earlier Dravidian culture. Contact between India and Persia during the period of Persian Ascendancy and between India and Greece after Alexander's invasion led to Persian and Greek influence on Indian culture. By this time the Roman Empire had spread to the three continents of Europe, Asia and Africa and India had contact with the Roman culture too.

From the downfall of the Roman Empire until the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope route to India in 1498, there was little direct contact between India and Europe. In Western Asia, the Arabs were the dominant power and it was through them that some aspects of Indian culture, like philosophy, music and dance moved towards the west.

The Europeans came to India towards the close of the 15th century and their interests in the beginning were commercial. It was only towards the end of the 18th century that the European intellectual world, particularly

Germany, became receptive to Sanskrit literature and Indian philosophy. In recent times, thanks to improved technology and frequent exchange of Indian and European scholars, there has been a greater spread of Indian thought and knowledge. Mahatma Gandhi's technique of Satyagraha, based on Non-Violence, Truth and Dharma, attracted some of the best minds in the West.

Indian culture not only influenced the West, but also had its impact on East Asia and South-East Asia. India had been in the closest contact with Central Asia, which was the centre of Buddhist culture for nearly ten centuries. From Central Asia Buddhism travelled to China, Korea, Japan and Tibet and helped to shape the distinctive civilizations of those countries. With South-East Asia, India's contact was mainly commercial, but in the wake of commerce, Indian culture spread to the countries of South-East Asia.

On account of its contact with several countries, Indian culture was deeply influenced by the cultures of those countries. India was influenced by Persia, Greece, Rome and then Islam. As a result of Muslim rule in India, there was a synthesis of Islamic and Indian cultures. The conquest of India by the British led to the study of English language. English education brought in Western scientific thought and technology and they gave a jolt to India's traditional life. One could see the beginnings of rationalism in Indian thought towards the close of the 19th century and this new Indian spirit led to the modernization of India.

It is this evolution of Indian culture through centuries that is attempted in the following pages. It is difficult for a historian to assess accurately the extent of foreign influences on Indian culture. Generally speaking, Indian culture was at first reluctant to accept new ideas but it was not able to reject them. Later, these new ideas were adapted and absorbed. These responses on the part of receiving civilizations have been characterized by Professor Arnold Toynbee as *'recoil'*, *'adaptation'* and *'synthesis.'* The present book is a historical study of Indian civilization, its responses to foreign cultures and its contribution to world thought.

PART A

I. BEGINNINGS OF CIVILIZATION

Civilization implies that people had ceased to wander from place to place and that they had settled down in a definite territory. It also implies the evolution of ordered methods of government, the development of trade, and a capacity for progress. The earliest civilizations were those which sprang up in River Valleys. The chief River Valleys where civilizations flourished in very early times were the *Nile Valley*, the *Valley of the Euphrates and the Tigris*, the *Indus Valley* and the *Valley of the Hwang-Ho or Yellow River*. It may be interesting to find out why the River Valleys became the centres of early civilizations. If people are settled in a territory where Nature is not very kind to them, they have to fight with Nature to obtain the material means for existence or human comforts. Such a people battling with Nature cannot rise in civiliation. If on the other hand, people settle down on plains watered by large rivers and provided with alluvial deposits, human comforts are easily available and the people get plenty of leisure to think of the problems of life other than mere existence. Therefore, what Aristotle called 'the good life', that is the life contributing to the growth of civilization, was possible only in riverine regions or river valleys.

Though the favourable conditions in the river valleys, made them centres of the earliest civilizations, too much emphasis should not be made of the physical factors. Scholars point out that according to the earlier view, living things are subject to the inexorable laws of Nature and the human factor or free will is not given any importance. Actually civilization is possible only on the action and reaction of man and environment. Though one of the weakest of animals, man alone was capable of adapting himself to his environment and of shaping it to suit his needs. In many areas, man adjusted his habits to natural conditions. In others he fought against Nature. In river valleys, he began cultivating the land and raising domestic animals. There was social organisation and each individual surrendered part of his freedom for the collective common

good. In this way village life was organised and as time passed, large cities came into existence with all the features of urban civilization.

Our knowledge of ancient civilization is very incomplete. We have to base our conclusions on the ruins of those civilizations—and the legends that have come down to us. The Pyramids of Egypt tell us about the grandeur of earliest Egyptian civilization, and the archaeological discoveries near Babylon and in North China give information about Sumerian Chinese cultures respectively.

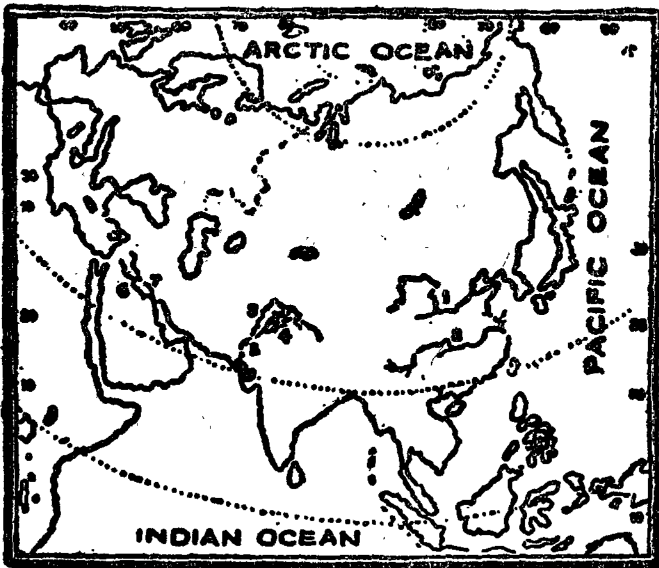


Fig. 1. River Valley Civilization
1. Hwang Ho, 2. Yangtze Kiang, 3. Indus, 4. Harappa, 5. Mohenjodaro, 6. Euphrates 7. Tigris

The earliest known civilizations were the Nile-Valley or Egyptian Civilization, the Euphrates-Tigris or Sumerian Civilization, and the Indus Valley Civilization. These river valley Civilizations, though by no means shut off from one another, had each its own character and its own features. In these civilizations there were political systems ranging from absolute monarchy to feudal type. Their economic systems ranged from Liberalism to State Socialism.

It is interesting to note that while Modern Egyptian and Mesopotamian cultures are completely dissociated from the civilizations which flourished on the Nile and the Tigris-Euphrates thousands of years ago, the present day Indian and Chinese cultures have a link with the earliest civilizations in their lands. We in India seek inspiration from concepts similar to those held by our ancestors in the Indus Valley. Our civilization is ancient and it has developed through centuries assimilating ideas from new cultures. No country was more frequently invaded and occupied by foreigners, yet no civilization spread abroad more extensively than that of India. India's contribution to human civilization has been enormous.

II. INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION

Introduction

Until quite recently, our knowledge of the ancient people of our country was derived from the Vedas and the Epics, and people were inclined to believe that Indian History started with the Aryan Invasion of 2000 B.C. But the archaeological researches conducted by scholars in North-Western India have pushed back the History of India to some 1250 years before the

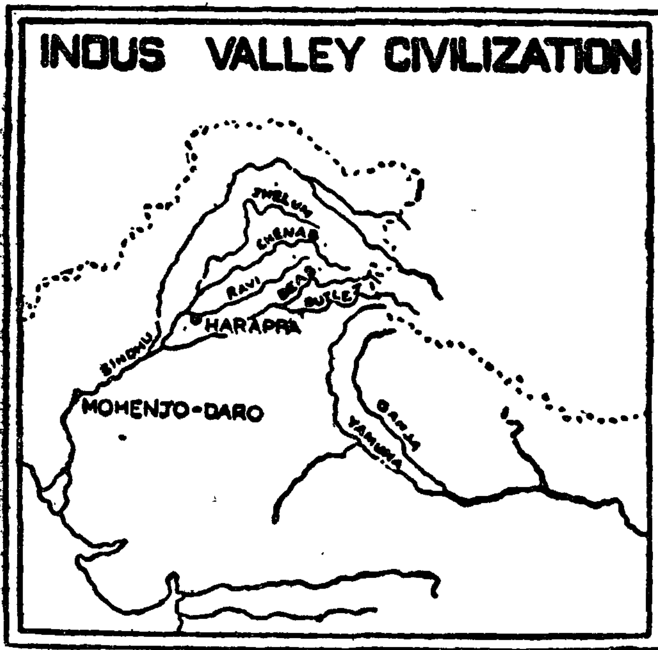


Fig. 2. Centre of Indus Valley Civilisation

Aryan Invasion. Sir John Marshall, R. D. Banerjee and M.S. Vats of the Indian Archaeological Department in their

search for the twelve altars, said to have been set up by Alexander the Great to mark the eastern limits of his empire, came upon the ruins of *Harappa* and *Mohenjo-daro*. Extensive excavations were conducted by the archaeologists and they discovered the ruins of two cities,—Mohenjo-daro on the right bank of the Indus in the Larkhana district in Sind and Harappa on the Ravi in the Montgomery district in the Punjab. Subsequent excavations in *Chanhu-daro* and *Amri* over 160 km. south-east of *Mohenjo-daro*, *Lohumjo-daro* on the west of the Indus, *Sur Jangal* in Northern Baluchistan and *Mehi* in Southern Baluchistan, have brought to light prehistoric antiquities representing the same Indus Valley Civilization. The Indus Valley Civilization which is also called *Harappan culture* occupied an area stretching from Delhi to Gujarat.

From the ruins of these cities we are able to know the high level of civilization of the people who lived in the Indus valley

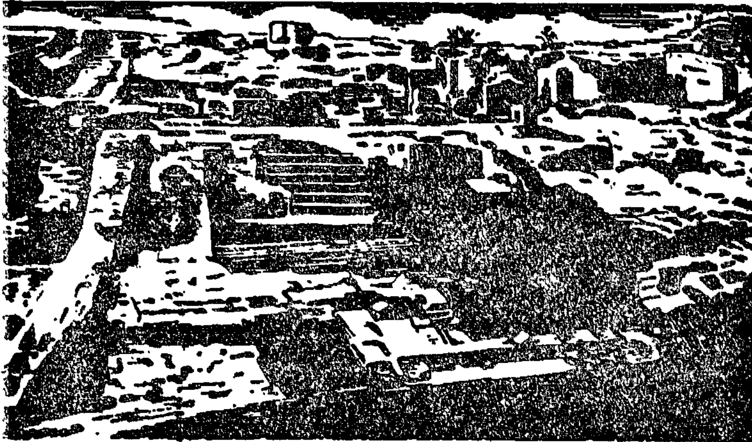


Fig. 3. Ruins of Mohenjo-daro

before the arrival of the Aryans. This civilization was a chalcolithic culture, that is the culture of an age when stone and copper were used. Archaeologists have therefore placed the period of the civilization from 3250 B.C. to 2750 B.C.

Social Conditions

The excavations have shown that Mohenjo-daro was laid out on a well defined plan. Streets were wide and straight and crossed at right angles. The main street was 10½ metres wide. The city must have been thickly populated. The houses were built of burnt brick. Stone was probably not available in this area. Even for foundation, sun-baked bricks appear to have been used. Each house had a courtyard and a number of rooms. Some houses had several storeys. Windows were provided only in the inner walls and not on the outer walls of the house. The city of Mohenjo-daro was provided with a good drainage system. Drains were laid underground and manholes were provided at intervals for the purpose of periodical cleaning. There were bathrooms in houses. There were also public baths. One of the important discoveries in Mohenjo-daro has been the *Great Bath* or the *Great Tank* with broad flights of steps leading to the water. By the side of the tank, rows of bathrooms were built for the convenience of the people. The city appears to have been provided with good drinking water. All these show that the Indus Valley people cared for personal cleanliness. In front of every house there was a dustbin into which people threw the waste. This shows the highly developed civic sense among the people of the Indus Valley.

From the discoveries at Harappa we find that the dwelling houses of people were high and had terraces. In several houses, there were separate rooms for women and guests.

From the pictures of the Age, we find that the people were short and fat and had small eyes. Both men and women appear to have worn jewels made of silver, gold and faience. The food of the people consisted of flesh, milk and vegetables. The chief amusements were gambling, dancing and playing marbles and some kind of chess. The people of the Indus Valley must have enjoyed a high degree of comfort and luxury. They must also have been an artistic people, for in the seals which have been discovered, there are beautiful engravings of the humped bull, tiger, elephant, rhinoceros and crocodile. The seals contain inscriptions but the script used has not yet been identified. It is pictographic, that is each sign signifies a particular word or object. Father Heras, a great scholar in Indian History,

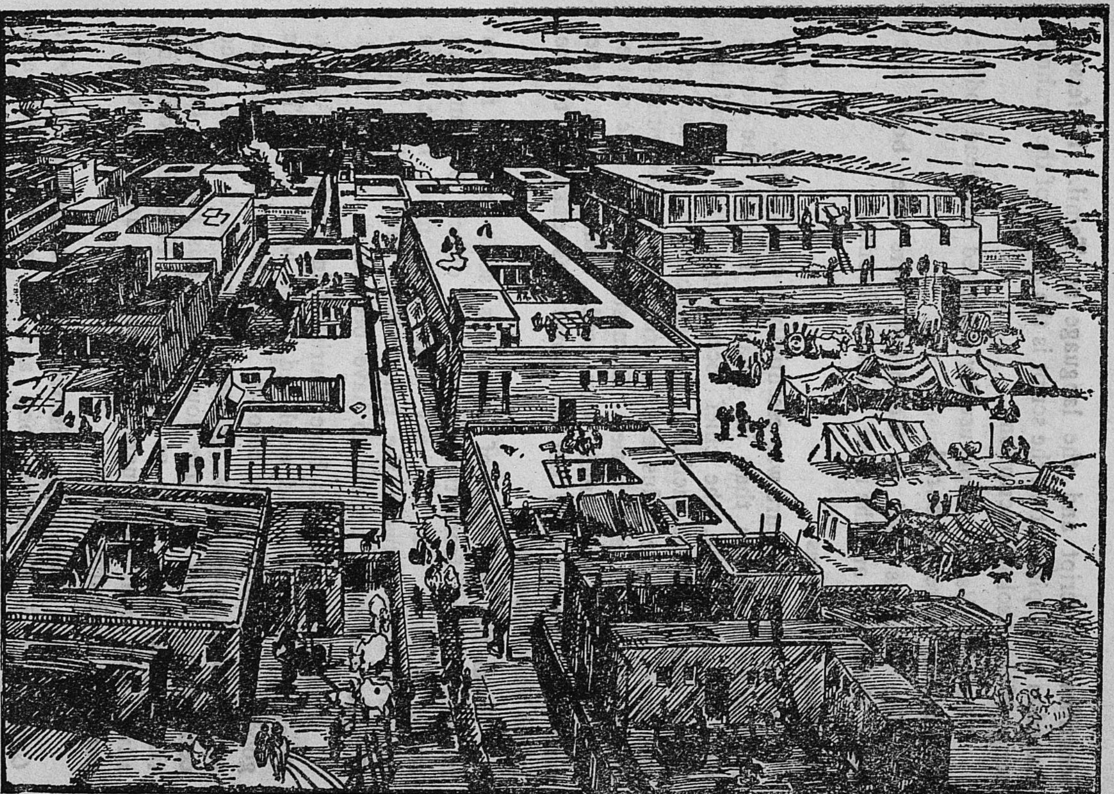


Fig. 4. Town planning in the Indus Valley

identifies the script and the language as Tamil. Professor Langdon is of opinion that the script is the parent of the Brahmi script of the Asokan inscriptions.

The Indus Valley people usually cremated the dead bodies; occasionally there was burial.

The weapons used in the period were the bow, the spear, the dagger and the mace, made of bronze.

Economic Conditions

Indus Valley culture was essentially a city-culture. People lived more in towns than in villages. Though the people were an urban folk, the chief occupation was agriculture. There were excellent facilities for agriculture, as the land was watered by the Indus and its tributaries. The principal crops were wheat and barley. Domestic animals like cattle, elephants, dogs and camels were used. Humped oxen were used for drawing carts but the horse was unknown to the Indus Valley people.

From the discovery of numerous seals of this region in Sumeria and from the discovery of objects of Sumerian region in Sind, we may say that there must have been extensive trade between the Indus valley and Western Asia. Weights and scales appear to have been used in those days.

Industries appear to have flourished in the Indus Valley. Weaving was known and wool and cotton were spun. Textile goods were dyed in many colours. There were skilled carpenters, masons, goldsmiths, gemsetters and blacksmiths. The ceramic and metal industries flourished in this region. Domestic utensils were made of baked clay. Faience, gold and silver were used for ornaments. Iron was unknown to the people of the Indus Valley.

The most remarkable discovery in Harappa is the *Great Granary*. It is 42 metres long and 40 metres broad and consists of two blocks of buildings separated by an aisle 7 metres wide which must have been roofed over. It is believed that the revenue from the people must have been collected in kind and must have been stored in this granary. Another discovery is what may be called *Workmen's Quarters*. Fourteen

small houses built in two blocks of seven houses each, separated by a long and narrow lane, intersected by many cross lanes constitute the 'Workmen's Quarters'. The houses are rectangular and have courtyards and two rooms each. They have bath rooms, from which brick channels and tapered pottery pipes that fitted closely into one another, carried away dirty water to street drains. From this it is clear that the welfare of the workers must have been looked after carefully in those days.

The people of Mohenjo-daro maintained close contact with the outside world. Evidence as to relations with Sumeria is overwhelming, and trade contacts were maintained with Egypt and Crete. The representation on a seal of a mastless ship, with a central cabin and a steersman seated at the rudder, indicates that the people of the Indus Valley were acquainted with maritime vessels.

Religion

We do not know much about their religion. There is no trace of temples in the Indus Valley. The seals show that many deities were worshipped. There was a Mother Goddess to whom human sacrifices were offered. There has been discovered a seal having the figure of a god with three faces in yogic pose, surrounded by four animals. Many scholars like Sir John Marshall regard this deity as a representation of Siva, conceived as Pasupathi or Lord of Beasts. Some of the main features of modern Hinduism were found in those days, for example, worship of Lingam, reverence for trees, like the pipal, worship of animals like the bull, sanctity of water and importance of bathing.

Comparison with the Aryan or Vedic Civilization

The Mohenjo-daro and Harappa ruins show a state of social and economic life which could only have been the result of many centuries of development. The Indus Valley people enjoyed the amenities and comforts of life to a greater degree than the Aryans who entered India later. It was a city-culture; it was urban, complex and luxurious. The Aryan civilisation, on the other hand, was rural, simple, agricultural and pastoral. Secondly, the animals known to the two peoples differ. The

horse and the cow were the favourites of the Aryans. The horse was unknown to the Indus Valley people and the bull was venerated rather than the cow. The Aryans had no knowledge of the tiger, and the elephant was a strange animal to them. The Indus Valley people were familiar with the tiger and the elephant. They were not however, acquainted with the lion, familiar to the Aryans. Thirdly, iron was not known to the Indus Valley people, while it was used by the Aryans for their weapons. Fourthly, the Indus Valley people were a pacific people and there is no trace of a fighting class among them. The Aryans, on the other hand, were a warlike people and carried on wars with the people who lived in our land before their invasion. Fifthly, though both the Indus Valley people and the Aryans ate meat, the Indus Valley people had a special liking for fish, for fish bones have been found in large quantities in the discoveries. Sixthly, while the Indus Valley people worshipped trees and animals and had images of gods and goddesses, the Aryans in the beginning worshipped only Nature.

No doubt there are some common features, for instance, the use of meat, acquaintance with gold, silver and copper and the practice of spinning and weaving, but the contrasts are so numerous that one cannot but conclude that the two civilisation belonged to two different peoples.

Compared with the Egyptian and Sumerian Cultures

The Indus Valley Civilization is roughly similar to the Egypatin and Sumerian Cultures. There is a general resemblance in pottery, tools, and weapons, but there are some differences also. Each civilization had its own script. The Indus Valley people used cotton while the Nile Valley people used flax. In Egypt and Sumeria, palaces and temples have been found, while in the Indus Valley they are absent. In Sumeria, the ordinary people lived in huts and there were no baths. Sir John Marshall thinks that the Indus Valley Culture was superior to that of Egypt and Sumeria.

Some scholars like Father Heras are of opinion that the Indus Valley Culture was of Dravidian origin. In the present state of our knowledge, we can only say that it was pre-Aryan and non-Aryan, a civilization that developed before the arrival of the Aryans in India and by a people who were not Aryans.

III. VEDIC CIVILIZATION

Aryan Invasion

Some scholars are of opinion that about 2000 B.C. a tall statured, fair complexioned people with prominent noses, known as the Aryans, migrated from Central Asia to India with their women, children and cattle through the Khyber and Bolan passes and settled in the Punjab. They seem to have very nearly exterminated the old inhabitants whom they called 'Dasyus'. Later another batch of the Aryans entered India through the Chitral and Giljit Passes. This time the Aryans were not accompanied by their women and children as the route was a very difficult one. They seem to have intermarried with the Dasyus when they expanded into the Gangetic Valley.

Scholars are not agreed as to the original home of the Aryans. Professor Max Muller advocates the Steppes of Central Asia; B. G. Tilak, our great national leader, regards the Arctic shores as the original home of the Aryans, and Professor Giles fixes it as Hungary. But of all the views, that of Professor Max Muller is generally accepted.

The Steppes of Central Asia might probably have been their original home. In that region there might have lived the Indo-European races and after some time, might have migrated to different regions. That the Indo-Aryans were a branch of the Indo-European races is shown by the similarities of Sanskrit to Greek, Latin, German, and English languages. It is believed that one branch of the Indo-European races settled in Iran and after a long time one section migrated to India and settled in the Punjab. This is proved (1) by the close affinities between the language of the Vedas and that of the Zend Avesta, the Iranian Veda and (2) German excavations at Boghazkoi in Cappadocia. Boghazkoi excavations have brought to light inscriptions of 1400 B. C. mentioning Vedic deities like Indra and Varuna.

That the Aryans settled in the Punjab is shown by the fact that the geographical horizon of the Rig Veda relates predominantly to North-West India including Afghanistan.

The Vedas and their historical value

The word 'Veda' means knowledge and to the Hindus it is sacred knowledge. The hymns or songs of the ancient Aryans were handed down from generation to generation with the proper accent on words and they were distributed in four Samhitas or collections known as the *Rig*, *Yajur*, *Sama* and *Atharva*. Later in the Epic Age, the Vedas were edited and set down in writing by Sage Vyaśa.

The Rig Veda, the 'Veda of Verses' was the Bible of the Aryans. It is by far the most important as well as the oldest of the Vedas. As it consists of lyrics, in praise of gods, it may be described as a 'Book of Psalms'. The Yajur Veda is the 'Veda of Prayers' offered at sacrificial ceremonies. Most of its hymns were composed when the Aryans were gradually expanding their power into the Gangetic Valley. The Sama Veda is the song-book of the Aryans. It contains a number of verses taken from the Rig Veda and adapted for singing at the Soma sacrifice by a special class of priests. The Rig, Yajur and Sama Vedas constitute the '*Trayi Vidya*' and only at a later period, the Atharva Veda attained canonical recognition. It is the Aryan book of incantations, spells and magic. It bears testimony to the coalescence of the Aryan and Dravidian cultures.

Ancient India has unfortunately no Herodotus or Thucydides nor has it an (Anglo Saxon) Indo-Aryan Chronicle tor ecord the principal events of the times. We have therefore to depend upon the Vedas for knowing the ancient past. The Vedic Literature is voluminous, very well preserved and contemporary and its evidence is more trustworthy than that of the Epics or the Puranas. Its antiquity gives it a unique importance in the History of the World. The geographic knowledge exhibited in the Vedas helps to trace the progress of the Aryanisation of India. The two defects of the Vedic Literature as historical

documents are that it is lacking in chronological data and that it is more concerned with spiritual questions and therefore the record of secular life is incidental and fragmentary.

The Rig Veda consists of 1017 hymns, comprising over 10,000 verses. The hymns are addressed to. Nature gods for increase of progeny, cattle, wealth and longevity of life and for victory over the Dasyus.

The geographical allusions in the Rig Veda show that the Aryans migrated through Afghanistan and settled first in the north-west corner of India. The area occupied by the Aryans in the north-west is called '*Saptasindava*' or the '*Land of the Seven Rivers*'. The Indus and its tributaries are referred to frequently but the Jumna and the Ganges are just mentioned. The Aryans were familiar with the Himalayas but the Vindhyas and the Narmada were not known to them nor had they penetrated to the mouth of the Indus. The word 'Samudra' simply denotes a collection of water. the flora and fauna mentioned in the hymns are those of north-west of India. The lion, a native of the Punjab, is frequently mentioned, while the tiger, a native of Bengal is not referred to at all. But it is mentioned in later Vedic Literature. The elephant is called '*mrighastin*' (animal with a hand), a name that could have been given only by strangers. Barley is referred to, but paddy grown in Bengal is not mentioned. All these clearly show that north-west India was the area first occupied by the Aryans and the Rig Veda describes the political, social and economic conditions of north-west India.

Political, social, economic and religious conditions in the Rig Vedic Age (2000-1500 B.C.)

1. *Political.* The Aryans lived in small tribes or Janas. They met with fierce resistance from the Dasyus or Dravidians. The form of government among the Rig Vedic Aryans was monarchy. In some tribes monarchy was elctive; in some, monarchical power was exercised by all the members of the royal family; and only in a few tribes, it showed a tendency to become hereditary. Monarchy was only in the making during the Rig Vedic Age.

The monarch was the supreme commander of the army but we know very little of his activities in times of peace. Very often he offered sacrifices to gods expressing his gratitude for success over the Dasyus. The Purohit who prayed on behalf of the tribe was highly respected and was given rich gifts. The hymns composed by Purohits in praise of the gifts received by them throw light on the social and economic conditions of the people. The judicial powers of the monarch were very simple since the state was in its infancy. Punishment of crimes was very much left to private individuals. Crimes were compounded and, compensation in the form of cows was given to the injured by the offender. The king was not absolute. He was assisted in the administration by the Commander-in-chief, the Purohit and the Yuvaraj. There was a popular assembly known as the Samiti to make laws and to decide questions of war and peace. There seems to have been a small council of chiefs known as the Sabha, but Prof. Keith thinks that the Sabha denoted only the place where the Samiti met. The financial and military resources of the King were very limited as the Kingdom was small.

The King and his chiefs made use of chariots drawn by horses in battlefields. The rank and file fought on foot. The offensive weapons were the sword, axe and lance; the defensive ones were breast-plates and shields made of rawhide. There is no reference to the use of cavalry in the hymns.

2. *Social.* The people lived mostly in villages enclosed by mudwalls. Houses appear to have been well built. A collection of villages formed a Vis or district and a collection of the latter constituted a Jana. The lowest unit of society was the family, at the head of which was the father who exercised absolute power over the members of his family. Monogamy was the rule and the standard of morality was very high. Child marriage was unknown. Some of the most-beautiful hymns in the Rig Veda are those welcoming the newly wedded bride into the family circle. Women occupied an honourable position in society. Some of them like Lopamudra and Apala were very learned and they composed hymns. Remarriage of widows was permitted in some circumstances. Sati was unknown. The

birth of a son was welcomed more than that of a girl. There was no caste system in the Rig Vedic Age. Society was divided on the basis of colour, the fair coloured Aryan and the dark coloured Dasyu. Interdining and inter marriage between the two classes of people were common.

Gaudy garments and ornaments were worn both by men and women. Necklaces, bracelets, waist-chains and ear-rings were the principal ornaments used. Meat, milk, butter, vegetables, ghee and barley constituted the diet of the people. The popular drink Sura was prepared from barley, but rich people drank Soma, the juice of a plant that grew largely on the Himalayan slopes.

The chief amusements of the Aryans were dancing, music and chariot-racing. Some dark features of the Aryan society were the exposure of female children and old men, intemperance and gambling. On the whole, the life of the Aryan was bright and cheerful. No great advance was made in medicine for it was thought that diseases were caused by evil spirits.

3. *Economic.* The Rig Vedic Aryans were mainly a pastoral people and their wealth consisted of flocks of sheep and herds of cattle. Trade was carried on by the barter system. Coined money was not in use. The cow was held in great esteem and it was a standard of value. Agriculture was also practised by the Aryans and barley and beans were cultivated. But paddy was not grown. Hunting was popular but fishing was not so. Various industries such as metal-working, carpentry, tanning, mat-making are alluded to in the hymns. The dignity of labour was emphasised and Vedic society did not make use of slave labour either for industrial or agricultural or domestic purpose.

4. *Religious.* The Religion of the Rig Vedic Aryans was one of Nature worship. The Aryans at first feared Nature, then admired Nature and finally worshipped Nature. The powers of Nature were personified and worshipped. Agni was their Fire-God and the first hymn in the Rig Veda is addressed to Him. Surya was their Sun God and the most sacred hymn in the Rig Veda known as the Gayatri is addressed to the Rising sun. Indra was their God of Rain and War and Varuna was their God of Moral Code. The Aswins were the divine physi-

cians. Yama was their God of Death. Rosy Dawn was personified as the beautiful Ushas and worshipped. Brahma, Vishnu and Siva with their consorts Saraswathi, Lakshmi and Parvathi are not mentioned at all. There was neither temple nor image worship. The home was the temple and the father of the family was the priest. Soma juice was offered to Gods at sacrifices. Towards the close of the Rig Vedic Period, the Aryans seem to have grasped the idea of one Supreme Being guiding and controlling the universe.

Political, social, economic and religious conditions in the Later Vedic Age or Epic Age (1500-1000 B.C.)

The Later Vedic Age is the period of the Later Vedas namely, Yajur, Sama and Atharva Vedas and the Brahmanas. It was also the period of the Epics and hence it is known as the '*Heroic Age*.' The Brahmanas are prose explanations relating to Brahman, prayer and sacrificial ceremony. (Brahman is Truth, Spirit and Bliss). By 1500 B.C. the language of the people had become so different that the interpretation of the Vedic hymns led to controversies among scholars. Authoritative prose explanations were therefore, composed, interpreting the sense of the hymn, its relation to the sacrifices and the symbolic meaning of the latter. They contain dogma, mythology, legend and philosophy and are therefore of great value to the historian.

The last portions of the Brahmanas are known as Aranyakas because their secret contents could not be taught to the uninitiated and had to be learnt only in the forests. They form a natural transition to the Upanishad the oldest of which are included in the Aranyakas. The Aranyakas have a special importance since they contain 'the celebrated philosophical speculations of Ancient India' The Upanishads may be described as the literature of spiritual power, appealing to man, irrespective of climes and ages. They evoked the enthusiastic admiration of German philosophers. Sankara and Madhva, the great Hindu religious reformers of the 8th century A D and 13th century A.D. respectively have written commentaries on them in Sanskrit and they have been translated into Persian by Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Shah Jahan. The Upanishads are the fountain head of Vedanta philosophy.

The two great Epics, the 'Ramayana' and the 'Mahabaratha' are regarded as semi-historical documents because every later poet or editor seems to have contributed his mite towards enlarging, altering and distorting them. Their historical value can be appreciated better, when the original portions are separated from later additions. With all their historical demerits, we can draw a picture of the Epic or Heroic Age from them.

1. *Political:* Between 1500 and 1000 B.C. the Aryans slowly expanded from the Punjab to the Gangetic Plain. It may be assumed that a second stream of the Aryans entered India during this period through the difficult Gilgit and Chitral passes The several Aryan tribes who occupied Northern India gave their names to the regions in which they settled. (Magadhans—Magadha; Kasis—Kasi; Angas—Anga; Chedis—Chedi; Panchalas—Panchala). Of these tribes the most famous were the Kurus, the Panchalas, the Kosalas, the Kasis and the Videhs who are all mentioned in the Epics.

Monarchy was the normal type of government but the kings of the Epic Age were more powerful than those of the Rig Vedic period. Stronger kingdoms absorbed the smaller ones and the kings took the titles of 'Ekrat', 'Samrat' and 'Adhirat'. They performed Aswamedha sacrifices to exhibit their Imperial authority. Sri Rama, Yudhistra, Karthaviriya and Mantadha were some of the Kings who performed Aswamedha. As the power of the king increased, that of the Samiti declined. Political conditions were not so simple as they were in the Vedic Age. Digvijayas were undertaken with the object of establishing one's political supremacy. It is interesting to note that the theories of Divine Right and Social Contract were discussed by Bhishma with Yudhistra after the Kurukshetra War.

The Kings of the Later Vedic Age were wealthier than those of the Rig Vedic period, for their resources were mary. Forests, mines, salt pans and customs duties yielded a large revenue, but their main source of income was the land revenue. As administration was complex in this period, the king was assisted by several officers. Towards the close of this period, monarchy in some states like Mithila, gave away to aristocracy.

2. *Social:* The only reference to the four castes in the Rigveda is in the 'Purushasukta', which is regarded by some scholars as an interpolation. Historically the caste system may be traced to an initial segregation of the Conquerors from the Conquered and a subsequent division among the Conquerors themselves as civilisation advanced. The caste system first began to distinguish people on the basis of the colour of the skin, for instance to distinguish the fair coloured Aryans from the dark coloured Dasyus. So it may have started in the Rig Vedic Age though it was then based on the colour of the skin. In the period of the Brahmanas and Upanishads, when the Aryans expanded to the Gangetic Plain and when there was an increase of population, society must have been divided at first, on a functional basis.

The growth of a sacred literature and the multiplication of sacrifices were perhaps responsible for the rise of the priestly Brahman class. The necessity to fight against the Dasyus and the wars carried on by kings to absorb smaller kingdoms, led to the rise of the Kshatriya class. Those who were engaged in agriculture and commerce were known as the Vaisyas. Those who performed menial services were called Sudras. It should be borne in mind that there was no rigidity in the caste system. Drona, Asvatama and Kriba who were Brahmans by birth became renowned warriors, while Janaka of Mithila and Bhishma who were Kshatriyas by birth became famous as great philosophers. Valmiki, the author of 'Ramayana' was a hunter; Sage Vyasa who edited the Vedas and wrote the 'Mahabaratha' was a fisherman. Inter-marriges between the Aryans and Dasyas must have taken place for Epic heroes and heroines like Rama, Krishna and Draupadi were of dark colour.

Two changes gradually came into the caste system. One was that while the caste arose as a result of the functional division of society, gradually it came to be based upon birth. Another change was that the caste system became rigid and interdining and inter-marriages were forbidden.

It must be noted however, that the *Indian* Caste system was not so bad as slavery in ancient Greece and Rome and in Mediaeval Europe.

The unit of society was the family at the head of which stood the father who exercised absolute power over the members of the family. Monogamy was the rule but polygamy was confined to the Kings. Child marriage was unknown and post-puberty marriages were normal. Girls were educated in the Rig Vedic and Epic periods. Just as some of the Rig vedic hymns were composed by ladies like Viswara, Ghosha, Lopamudra, Apala and Mudgalani, in the Upanishads, Yagnavalkya is questioned by his wife Maitreyi and challenged by Gargi, though that sage met the challenge successfully. There were women teachers also. Though woman's status was inferior to man, her equality with man in religious ritual was substantial. In the Epic Age widow remarriage was not allowed. This is shown by Arjuna's vow mentioned in the 'Mahabaratha'. Arjuna is said to have taken a terrible vow that if he failed to avenge the death of his heroic son, Abhimanyu, he would go to the Hell reserved for those who married widows.

As in the Rig Vedic Age meat eating was common among the Aryans. The Sanskrit word 'Goghna' (guest) means one for whom a cow was slain. Vegetarianism was adopted by the Aryans later due to the influence of Jainism and Buddhism. From the jewels cast down by Sita, when she was carried away by Ravana, it may be inferred that women in the Epic Age had worn bangles, necklaces, anklets and girdles.

Drunkenness and gambling were common among the people of this Age. The Yadhavas among whom Lord Krishna was born were hard drunkards and they are said to have disappeared from the arena of History on account of a drunken brawl. Yudhishtra and Nala suffered on account of their gambling habit.

3. *Religious:* It is in the domain of religion that the Epic period witnessed a great change. The simple ritualism of the Rig Vedic times was replaced by elaborate rituals and sacrifices. Kings performed the Rajasuya, Vajapeya and Aswamedha sacrifices. These rituals and sacrifices helped the ascendancy of the priestly class and the religion was called the Brahmanical Religion.

4. *Scientific progress:* Geometry had its inception in the rules laid down for the construction of sacrificial altars. As

sacrifices had to be offered at certain lucky constellations, the study of the positions and movements of stars became necessary. No great sacrifice could commence during the southern progress of the Sun known as 'Dakshinayana'. Even to die during the 'Dakshinayana' was considered to be a misfortune. Hence Bhishma who was mortally wounded in the Kurukshetra War waited for the arrival of 'Uttarayana' (northern progress of the Sun) to shed his mortal coils. During the Rig Vedic period, the year was divided into 12 Lunar months. In the Later Vedic Period, a 13th or inter calary month was added to adjust the Lunar with the Solar year. It will therefore be seen that much progress was made in the science of astronomy. The slaughter of animals at sacrifices helped the acquisition of a knowledge of anatomy. The Atharva Veda and the Satapatha Brahmana give a correct list of human bones. Numerous diseases such as leprosy, dysentery, and jaundice are mentioned and remedies suggested.

5. *Economic:* During the Epic Age, great progress was made in agriculture. Better ploughs and manures were used; various kinds of grain, such as wheat and paddy and oil seeds were grown. Cattle rearing was one of the occupations of the people and wars between rival kings were fought on account of cattle-lifting. 'Virataparva' in 'Mahabaratha' refers to the cattle-lifting by Duryodhana and Arjuna's recovery of the Viratanagar cattle. Urban life developed and industrial activity became more varied. The most important cities during this period were Hastinapura, Kausambi, and Kampulya. An increased knowledge of metals, such as tin, lead and silver was acquired. Coins were used and usury was practised. There was a variety of occupations, such as jewel making, chariot-making, basket and rope making, smelting and weaving.

From the above account, we see that the Later Vedic or Epic World was quite different from the Rig Vedic World. The Aryans had settled in the Gangetic Plain where great kingdoms arose. The 'Ramayana' and Arjuna's pilgrimage may be taken to indicate the slow penetration of the Deccan by the Aryans. Religion had become a bundle of ceremonies and sacrifices. Caste system had risen though it was not so rigid as it was in later times.

IV. INDIA AND THE ANCIENT WORLD

The Indus Valley people maintainted contact with the outside world. Evidence as to relations with West Asia and Egypt is overwhelming and trade contacts were maintained with Sumeria, Egypt and Crete. Even after the destruction of Indus Valley Civilisation, there were commerical contacts between India and the West. Trade was carried on by land and sea routes. The overland route ran through Khyber Pass and across the Hindukush to Balk where met all the routes from central Asia and China on the east and the Mediterranean Ports on the west. The sea route went along the sea coast of India, Persia and Arabia and through the Red sea to Egypt. Through these land and sea routes contact was established between India and the countries of the Ancient world like Persia, Greece, the Roman Empire and China from very early times. When two countries came into contact with each other in course of trade or conquests, ideas came to flow from one country to another. There was the influence of India on the other country as well as the latter's influence on India. We shall now deal with the mutual influence of the countries which came into contact.

India and Persia or Iran

The contact of India with Persia dates from earlest times. The discoveries at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa reveal that the people of the Indus Valley were in close touch with Sumeria and Persia. The Rig Veda and Zend Avesta (the Sacred Book of the Persians) prove that the ancestors of the Indo-Aryans and Persians had formed a single group at one time, that they had settled in Persia and that later one group known as Indo-Aryans came to India and setlled in our country. Commercial intercourse between India and Persia existed from very early times. With the rise of the Persian Empire under the Achaemenian Dynasty in the 6th century B.C., commercial contact developed into a political one.

Cyrus the Great (558–530 B.C.) is credited with the conquest of Gandhara (N.W. India) by historians such as

Herodotus, Arrian and Strabo. *Cambyses* (530–522 B.C.), his successor was engaged in the conquest of Egypt and had no time to turn towards India. His successor Darius I (522–486 B.C.) invaded India in the time of Bimbisara and conquered Sind and a great part of the Punjab. Sind, a large part of the Punjab and Gandhara constituted the 20th Satrapy of the Persian Empire; it contributed one-third of the revenue of all the Asiatic provinces and was therefore the brightest jewel of the Persian crown. Darius sent out an expedition under his Admiral Skylax to explore the coast from the mouth of the Indus to the Persian Gulf. Under *Xerxes* (486–465 B.C.) the son and successor of Darius, Greece was invaded by Persia. Herodoius tell us how Indian soldiers clad in their cotton clothes, fought in the battle of Plataea. The Persian defeats in Greece perhaps prevented the Persian kings from pursuing a forward policy in India. It is not clear how long Persian rule lasted in the Punjab. Perhaps, in the reign of Artaxerxes II (405–358 B.C.), about 380 B.C., the Indian satrapy was lost.

Some scholars declare that the contact with Persia for quite a long time influenced Indian culture to a large extent. *Dr. Spooner* of the Indian Archaeological Department in an article published in the Journal of Royal Asiatic Society in 1915 declared that Persian influence on India was considerable. He characterised the Mauryan period as the '*Zoroastrian Period of Indian History*'. He said that the Mauryan dynasty was a Persian dynasty, that Chandragupta's original home was Persepolis, that the term 'Maurya' was derived from Meru in Persia, that Kautilya, the Buddha and the Nandas were all Iranians and that in short, there was a 'Zoroastrian Period' of Indian History.

His arguments are the following:

1. Many of the buildings of the Mauryas at Pataliputra were built on the model of the palaces of Persepolis and Susa in Persia.

2. Megasthenes refers to two Persian customs followed by Magadha, namely, the hair-washing ceremony of the Emperor on his birth day and the practice of punishing criminals by removing their hair.

3. Chandragupta Maurya built a Trunk Road from Attock in the north-west of India to Tamralipti in the east, on the model of the Trunk Road built by Darius-I connecting Susa and Miletus in Asia Minor, a distance of over 3200 km.

4. Asoka published his edicts on stones and pillars imitating the Persian Emperors. Even the form was copied. In the Asokan Inscription are the words, 'Thus Saith His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King'. These words agree with the Persian inscription, 'Thus Saith Darius the Great King'

5. The capitals of the Persian pillars and the figures of animals, seated or standing back to back, agree with those of the capitals of the Asokan Pillars.

6. Indian coins of the 3rd Century B.C., have the figures of Mount Meru and Nandi (Bull) like 'the Persian Coins of the time.'

Prof. E. B. Havell and many other historians reject Dr. Spooner's theory of excessive Persian influence on Indian culture. They say that the bell shape of the columns can be obtained, if the Indian lotus is held downwards. Again much reliance cannot be placed on the prevalence of similar customs. *Prof. A. B. Keith* says, 'A Zoroastrian period of Indian History never existed, nor indeed was any such existence to be expected.'

The correct position is as follows: The Mauryan administration, palace organisation and some court customs were influenced by Persian ideas and models. Even the Mauryan idea of Empire was perhaps inspired by the Persian example. Free India's National Emblem which contains four lions and a wheel is a copy of the Persian Pillar, but it is modified to suit Indian sentiment. The Dharmachakra (the wheel of the Law) is a symbol of the Buddhist faith and is purely Indian in conception. Asoka's practice of inscribing rocks and pillars was due to Persian influence, but he used the edicts to spread the simple and human teaching of the Buddha. Indian coins were based on Persian models and the Kharoshti script, derived from the Persian Aramean Script was used in north-west India. The term 'Hindu' is of Persian origin. Indians were known to Persians as the people of the land of Sindhu, the Indus River. The Persians softened the initial S to H, thus making it 'Hindu'

The Greeks who came to know India after the Persians changed the word into 'Indus' and the land of Indus came to be called 'India'.

India and Greece

The next important stage in the contact between India and the Ancient world was inaugurated by the invasion of *Alexander the Great*. There was a shortlived Greek rule in the Punjab and Sind. Chandragupta Maurya the founder of the Mauryan dynasty not only expelled the Greeks from the Punjab and Sind but also obtained from *Seleucos Nikator*, the successor of Alexander for his Asiatic dominions, Afghanistan and Baluchistan. The Mauryan Empire extended beyond the Indus and was neighbour to the Seleucidal Greek Empire in Asia. Seleucid kings sent ambassadors like Megasthenes and Daimachus to the Mauryan Court at Pataliputra. *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, the Greek king of Egypt also sent an envoy named Dionysius to the same court. Megasthenes tells us that in the city of Pataliputra there was a special department to look after foreigners. This indicates that there was a large influx of foreigners many of them Greeks, (called as Yavanas) into India. The 13th Rock Edict of Asoka refers to five Greek kings of West to whom Buddhist Missions were sent to preach Buddhism. After the decline of the Mauryan Empire, there were Greek rulers in the Kabul Valley and the Punjab, the most famous being *Menander*, king of Sagala (modern Sialkot).

Thus for nearly a century there was close contact between India and the Greek world. This led to the influence of Hellenism or Greek culture on India and the effect of Indian culture on Greece. The question of the Greek influence on ancient Indian culture has not always been considered dispassionately. Many European scholars are inclined to exaggerate it. The German writer *Dr. Niese* would attribute many of the bright features of the Indian culture to the influence of Hellenism. Indian scholars, on the other hand, deny the influence of Hellenism completely. The truth lies midway between the two views.

Some European writers say that the 'Ramayana' is only an Indian version of the Homeric epic, 'Iliad', because there are

parallel incidents like the abduction of Helen and Sita, the exploits of Achilles and Rama and the Siege of Troy and Lanka. This is not correct. As *Monier Williams* says, 'To compare the "Ramayana" and the "Mahabaratha" with the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey" is to compare the Indus and the Ganges with the mountain streams of Thessaly. For unity of action and elegance of style, for graphic description of heroic deeds and natural scenery, for the deep acquaintance it displays with the most refined emotions of the human heart, "the Ramayana" is far superior to the "Iliad". It may be asserted therefore that the Indians were not at all indebted to the Greeks for the art of writing Epic poetry.

Some western writers think that the Indians learnt to write dramas from the Greeks because the word 'yavanika', meaning curtain, is derived from 'yavana'. This view is not accepted. The Greek stage had no curtain at all. There are some resemblances between the Indian and Greek dramas, such as the avoidance of bloody actions on the stage, but the similarities are far outweighed by the differences. The Indian drama with its neglect of the unities of time and place, with its mixture of prose and verse and comic and tragic elements does not resemble the stern Greek drama. It is absurd to hold that Kalidasa was imitating the Greek dramatist Euripides. The Greek dramatist was in his own way a good writer but Kalidasa was a genius. His literary works have no comparison; they are unique.

Again a few western writers have declared that the Indians learnt the art of building with stones only from the Greeks. This view is wrong. There are references in the Rig Veda and in the Buddhist Jataka Tales to stone-walled towns. The Jarasanda Baitak in Magadha and the ruins of the Temple of Vasudeva Samkrishna built before the arrival of the Greeks in India, indicate that the Indians were acquainted with the art of building with stone from the days of the Vedas.

It is equally absurd to beleive that Chandragupta learnt the art of administration from Alexander the Great. Alexander's stay in India was all too brief and Chandragupta could not have learnt anything from him. The organisation of the Mauryan Empire was the work of Kautilya and it was based upon 'Arthasastra' which is purely an Indian work.

In the sphere of Mathematics the Greek contribution was not much. The numerals and the decimal system are the gifts of India not only to Greece but to the whole world. Chathurangam or the chess was borrowed from Ancient India by the Greeks.

In philosophy Indians owed nothing to the Ancient Greeks 'The loftiest philosophy of the Europeans,' says *Schelegal*, 'is like a feeble lamp before the glorious noon-day sun of the Indian philosophy.' Greek philosophers like Pythagoras, Thales and Anaxagoras are said to have visited India and to have learnt the doctrines of the Immortality of the Soul and its Transmigration. In Logic the superiority of India may be seen. Gautama, the founder of the Nyaya System describes five members of the syllogism instead of the Greek three. In religion, many Indo-Greeks became Buddhists. The Greek Menander, ruler of Sagala, was a Buddhist. That he was devoted to the Buddha is proved by the figure of the Wheel of Dharma in his coins. Scholars also identify him with Milinda, the dsciple of Nagasena, a Buddhist sage. The Sacred Pali Work, 'Milinda Panha' assigned to Nagasena and Milinda contains questions and answers and explains the Mahayana form of Buddhism. One of the successors of Menander was *Antalcidas*. His capital was Taxila and he was a contemporary of Bhagabhadra, the ninth Sunga king of Pataliputra. He sent an ambassador *Heliodorus* to the court of the Sunga king. That ambassador created a Garudastamba at Besnagar (Gwalior State) and inscribed on it that he was a Parama Bhagavata or devotee of Vishnu. The Besnagar column shows the influence of Hinduism on the Greeks.

We have pointed out that in Epic poetry, drama, stone-building, administration and philosophy there was no Greek influence on Indian culture. We will now refer to the spheres where Hellenic influence was felt.

The Greeks, particularly, the Indo-Greeks or Bactrian Greeks were responsible for introducing a finer type of coins in India. Before the coming of the Greeks, the Indians used mainly punch-marked coins. The Greek coins were bilingual and the legends were in Greek and vernacular languages. Indians imitated the Greek coins and the later coins of India were more artistic than the previous ones.

In astronomy the ancient Indians seem to have learnt much from the Greeks. The author of the 'Gargi Samhita' observes, "that though the Yavanas (Greeks) were Milechas (barbarians), they deserved to be worshipped as Devas, since they were acquainted with the movements of the celestial bodies' Of the five Indian astronomical books, two have western names and they are 'Romaka Siddhanta' and 'Paulisa Siddantha' The latter was perhaps named after Paul, the great astronomer of Alexandria (who lived about 378 A.D.). Greek terms for planets and stars were used by Indian astronomers. 'Trikonam' is a Greek word: Predictive astrology in India was indebted to the Greeks. The art of casting horoscopes was characterised by Greek methods, and Greek technical terms were freely used.

In sculpture the influence of Hellenism was great. The *Gandhara Sculpture* shows the influence of Greece. This type of sculpture developed in the reign of Kanishka (first two centuries of the Christian era) is found in Gandhara. Nagarjuna Konda and Amaravathi sculptures in Andhra Pradesh were modeled on the Gandhara type: In the Gandhara type, various images of the Buddha were produced, the Prince, the Ascetic and the Enlightened. The reliefs depict his Birth, his Renunciation and his Temptation. Thus the subjects are Indian (especially Buddhist) but they are made according to the Greek technique. The figures are well-proportioned; the fine drapery round the image and the halo round the head of the Buddha are wonderfully depicted. Gradually the sculpture was developed on indigenous lines. Thus Indian sculpture was influenced by its contact with Greece.

In the sphere of medicine also there was Greek influence. The rules prescribed for Indian physicians by Charaka, the court physician of Kanishka are similar to those which a Greek doctor observed before commencing practice. At the same time, it should be noted that the Indians were as great as the Greeks in the sphere of medicine, for they were the first to practise dissection of the human body, the first to use minerals and mercury internally and the first to introduce skin-grafting. It is therefore difficult to say whether the Greeks learnt from the Indians or vice versa. Probably, the Graeco-Indian contact was mutually beneficial.

To conclude, India's contact with Greece enriched her culture in some departments such as coinage, astronomy and sculpture and to some extent in medicine, but there was little or no influence on literature, politics and philosophy.

India and Rome

During the period of the Roman Empire, that is, in the first four centuries of the Christian era, there was trade between India and the west. The policy of the Roman Empire was to encourage direct sea route with India, and diminish as far as possible the overland trade, as the latter lay through Parthia which was hostile to Rome. There was brisk trade between the Western Coast of India and the Roman Empire. Articles of luxury from India were in great demand in Rome. A lot of gold flowed into India and this is shown by the discovery of a very large number of coins in South India. *Dr. Sewell* concludes from the discovery of coins that probably Roman merchants resided in Madura and in other parts of South India. The literature of the Sangam Age (first three centuries of the Christian era) refers to the abundance of Greek and Roman coins in South India, and the presence of foreign merchants in seaport towns like Puhar and Korkai.

Along with the development of trade, there were diplomatic relations between a few Indian States and the Roman Empire. We hear of embassies sent to Rome in the times of Hadrian, Aurelius and Constantine. One important result of the commercial and political relationship between India and the Roman Empire was that both India and the Roman Empire gained a more correct and intimate knowledge of each other. Roman historians have made references about India in their books. Strabo, Arrian, Megasthanes, Pliny, the author of 'Natural History', the author of the Periplus of the Erythrean Sea', are some of the many historians who have thrown a flood of light on Indian conditions in their works.

Alexandria founded by Alexander the Great at the mouth of the river Nile became a great international centre, where not only commercial goods but philosophic and scientific ideas were exchanged between the East and the West. The influence of

Indian religion in the Western countries cannot be doubted. The ruins of a Buddhist monastery in Seistan show the prevalence of Buddhism on the Persian borderland. References in the Chinese annals indicate the existence of Buddhism in Parthia. A Parthian prince is said to have abdicated the throne and become a Buddhist monk in the second century A.D. Alberuni, the famous Arab historian has stated that in the first few centuries of the Christian era Khorasan, Persia, Iraq Mosul and the country up to the frontier of Syria was Buddhistic. There is evidence also to show that there was an Indian colony in the Upper Euphrates, as early as the second century B.C. and that the Indians in the colony built two temples containing the images of Gods. Some scholars are of opinion that Christianity might have been influenced by Indian religions. Thus resemblances between the internal arrangements of the Christian Church and a Buddhist Chaitya Hall, the asceticism practised by some early Christian sects, relic worship and the use of the rosary might have been borrowed by Christianity from Indian religions.

While Buddhism travelled from India to the west, Christianity came from the west to our country. Christianity was preached in India by St. Thomas, one of the Apostles of Christ. He seems to have visited the court of *Gondophernes* in the first century and preached Christianity. He then proceeded to the Kerala country where he made many converts to the Christian faith and founded a number of bishoprics in that region. From the south-west of India, he went to Mylapore where he is said to have been killed. Thus Christianity came to India from the Roman Empire long before the arrival of the British.

India and China

Trade and commerce dominated India's relations with the west and culture remained a subordinate partner throughout the long period of contact. In marked contrast, Indian contacts with Central Asia, China and South-East Asia were mainly cultural, with trade playing a secondary role. Whatever the effect of Indian influence on Western Civilisation, there is no doubt that India was the radiating centre of a civilisation which left a deep mark on the greater part of Asia.

In order to understand the expansion of Indian culture to China, we must have a clear idea of the different routes between India and China passing through Central Asia. The main route lay through Peshawar, Kabul Valley, and Balkh (in Bactria). From Balkh three routes led to the Tarim Basin or modern Chinese Turkestan or Sinkiang. One was across the Pamir to China; the other was a northern route across the Oxus and the Jaxartes to China; and the third was the southern most route through the Oases of Kashgar and Yarkhand to China. There was also a sea route between India and China along the Sea of China and the Indian Ocean.

Buddhism travelled from India to Central Asia during the reign of Asoka. This is proved by the discovery of images and the remains of stupas and viharas built after the Indian model in Central Asia. There have also been discovered Buddhist texts, written in Sanskrit and Prakrit as well as in the local languages of Central Asia. Although Buddhism was the popular religion, Brahmanical culture was also present in Central Asia. This is proved by the seals with effigies of Ganesa, Kubera, and Trimukha at Niya and Endere in Central Asia.

India's contact with China began even before the beginning of the Christian era and the relations between the two countries were at first commercial. Chinese silk was highly prized in India. But as always happens in all countries, ideas were carried along with goods and this led to the introduction of Buddhism in China. According to Chinese tradition, Buddhist missionaries from India came to China after Asoka's time. According to another account a Chinese General, who led a military expedition to Central Asia returned to China in 721 B.C. with a golden statue of the Buddha.

Almost all historians declare that the introduction of Buddhism into China must have taken place in the first century A.D. Two Indian Buddhist monks, *Dharmaratna* and *Kasyapa Matanga* came to the Chinese Court at the invitation of the Chinese Emperor. A monastery was built for them by imperial order at the capital city of Peking and it was called the *White Horse Monastery*. (As the Indian monks brought a number of sacred books and relies on a white horse, the Monastery was so called).

Thus Buddhism got a footing in China. Later, many Buddhist monks of different nationalities came to China from Central Asia. We have already stated in the section on 'India and Rome' that a Parthian prince is said to have abdicated the throne and became a Buddhist monk in the 2nd century A.D. This Parthian Prince was *She-Kao* (Lokottama) who settled in the 'White Horse Monastery' with a number of Parthian and Sogdian monks. The Chinese have preserved the names of a large number of missionaries who preached Buddhism in several parts of China. We thus see that Buddhism and with that Indian culture became a powerful civilizing force in Central Asia and China.

There was a desire on the part of many Chinese Buddhists to visit India, the Holy Land of Buddhism and collect Buddhist sacred books. The most important of them were *Fahien* who came to India in the 4th century A.D., *Hieuin-Tsang* and *I-tsing* who visited India in the 7th century A. D. These Chinese pilgrims have left accounts about the India they visited.

It must be noted that when Buddhism came to China, there were already two powerful religions, namely Confuscianism and Taoism. *Confucius* and *Lao-tse* (the founder of Taoism) lived in the 6th century B.C., the period in which the Buddha lived. Confucianism was a code of conduct while Taoism was both a religion and a philosophy. Though Buddhism was considered by the Chinese to be a foreign religion, the cultural atmosphere of China was conducive to its development. Neither Confucianism nor Taoism possessed a highly developed spiritual character. Buddhism with its religiosity, charity and faith brought to China spirituality that it lacked. Buddhism absorbed Confucianism and expanded rapidly throughout China.

It will thus be seen that India in ancient times did not lead an isolated life, but maintained a close contact with the great civilizations of Persia, Greece, Rome and China, influencing them and being influenced by them.

V. INDIAN STATE

Of all forms of human organisation the State is the most important. It is the keystone of the gigantic arch of social life. The phenomenon of the state has drawn the attention of all thinkers from the dim dawn of History to the modern times. Manu, Kautilya and Thiruvàlluvar in Ancient India and Mahatma Gandhi in Modern times have discussed the theory and the development of state.

What is the state? According to a modern sociologist the state is an association of associations which acting through law as promulgated by a Government endowed to this end with coercive power, maintains within a community territorially demarcated the universal external conditions of social order. Thus the essentials of a state are a definite territory, population, government and sovereignty. In ancient Indian thought, the state is defined as the opposite of Matsya nyaya, the rule of the big fish swallowing the small. It represents the conditions of order, law, justice, security and welfare.

POLITICAL THOUGHT

Manu

Manu is regarded as the earliest law giver of India and historians as such assign him to the period before the 6th century B.C. It is in 'Manu-Smriti,' that we first come across a regular exposition of the legal system, which was followed later in the Dharma Sastras. It is held in the greatest respect by the Hindus because it is supposed to be of divine origin. Manu's views on politics and law will now be examined.

In the 'Mahabaratha', Yudhistra asks Bhishma, '*How is it that the king who is one is obeyed by the people who are many*'. Bhishma replies that 'once upon a time when people were good and every one conscientiously discharged his obligations, a state was not felt necessary. But with the passage of time conditions changed. Might became right. The law of the jungle prevailed. Men prayed to the gods to save them from anarchy. Brahmadeva created a code of law and enforced it

through his son Virajas. Thus was the state born, and thus was born the first king.' So according to the 'Mahabaratha' the state was a Divine creation, accepted by man as such and helping him to be good. The state thus came into being to end anarchy. It was set up to promote the three ideals of life, dharma, artha and kama. The first was concerned with individual and social morality; the second with economic well being; and the last with the maintenance of social order and enjoyment of life. Force or danda was to be used to promote the three ideals.

The theory of the Divine origin of kingship is also mentioned in the Manu Samhita. In the 'Manu Samhita' it is stated that the Lord created a king for the protection of his whole creation and that a king was a deity in human form. One could also see in the Manu Sambita a reference to the Social Contract theory. It is stated that if the king could not recover stolen property he should compensate the owner.

Manu gives special Importance to the use of Danda by kings to punish wrong doers At the same time he is not prepared to vest in the king absolute authority. The Stuart kings of England claimed the Divine Right to crush all opposition to their authority. Manu does not favour absolute authority of doing whatever the king likes. He declares that while a good king prospers, a tyrant will be destroyed. 'The very Danda, which is the symbol of royal authority strikes down the king who swerves from his duty together with his relatives' (Manu). To govern a country making a proper use of Danda is difficult and Manu gives elaborate directions for the proper education and training of the king.

We do not find any constitutional checks on the authority of the king. There were only moral checks. The king was required to carry on the administration according to the principles of Dharma. The right of the people to rebel against a wicked or tyrannical king is conceded by Manu.

The great law giver Manu declares that the king was not the state, but merely a part of it. The state was conceived as an organic whole and its different constituent parts were 'the king,

the minister, the country, the fort, the treasury, the army, and the friend.' Injury to any of the constituent elements was to be regarded as a serious offence. None of the organs is really superior to the others. 'Each limb is particularly qualified for the fulfilment of a distinct purpose and hence each is declared to be the most important in reference to that purpose which is fulfilled by its means' (Manu).

Manu regards the kingly office as a trust. He must have a good education and training. He should govern with the help of 7 or 8 ministers, one of whom should be a chief and he should be a Brahmin. Manu recommends mild and beneficent measures to be adoped towards a conquered country.

Manu mentions four sources of law namely Sruti or the Vedas, Smriti or Dharmasastras, customs of holy men and one's own inclination. In case of conflict, the Sruti prevails over Smriti and these have precedence over the last two. Manu gives a classification of law under 18 heads. As regards punishment for a crime, it varied according to the caste of the criminal and the victim.

Kautilya

Perhaps the most valuable contribution made to political thought in ancient India was that by Kautilya. Kautilya, known also as Vishnugopa or Chanakya wrote the famous political treatise 'Arthasastra' in the 4th century B.C. He helped Chandragupta Maurya to become the ruler of Maghadha and then became his Chief Minister. He knew the science and art of Government. His work Arthasastra as well as the excellent administrative system of the Mauryas dispel the old belief that the ancient Indians were at their best only in the world of thought and that they had failed in that of action. The 'Arthasastra' was translated for the first time by Mr. Sama Sastry in 1905. It is written in prose with a few stanzas at the end of every chapter. Arthasastra is 'the science which treats of the means of acquiring and maintaining the earth.' It is also 'Dandasuti', the science of sceptre or Government. Its importance is admitted by *Macdonnall* thus, 'No work of Indian Literature supplies such full information on the political and

economic conditions of Ancient India.' Prof. *Radha Kumar Mukherjea* observes, 'The Arthasastra is a record of the secular and practical activities and achievements of the Hindu genius, as distinguished from the intellectual and spiritual.'

The Arthasastra consists of 15 books and 150 chapters. We may divide it into three parts, the first dealing with the king and his council and the departments of government; the second with civil and criminal law; and the third with inter-state law, diplomacy and war. Its range is encyclopaedic and some scholars have doubted whether one small head could contain so much knowledge and wisdom.

The Arthasastra gives ample information about Kautilya's political views. All Hindu thought assumed that man must try to achieve salvation or heavenly bliss and social institutions existed to further the end. Political institutions existed to support the social order and hence to achieve the spiritual aim. For the realisation of the spiritual life, the state could not be restricted to merely police functions or the administration of justice. It was totalitarian as it embraced the whole life of the people. At the same time, there was no regimentation. Kautilya's Arthasastra gives a vivid picture of the state activity in the Mauryan period. The state protected the country against foreign invasion; preserved internal order, promoted true religion; prescribed conditions of divorce, separation, second or subsequent marriages; regulated the sale and use of liquor; controlled the professions and occupations of people; regulated the economic life of the people; provided roads with paths for animals throughout the country.

Kautilya wants the king to be guided by Dharmasatras in the discharge of his royal duties. The king must have a council of ministers or Mantriparishad to advise him in matters of state. As Kautilya puts it, 'sovereignty is possible only with assistance, for a single wheel can never move'. One Minister should be chosen as a Chief Minister and according to Manu, he should be a Brahmin. But Kautilya does not lay down any such condition, though he, a Brahmin, was the Chief Minister of Chandragupta Maurya.

In regard to diplomacy, war and interstate relations Kautilya's views were similar to those held by modern states. He laid down humane rules of warfare and recommended mild and beneficent measures to be adopted towards a conquered country.

Kautilya lays down that, Dharma (Sacred Law), Vyavahara (contract), Charitra (custom) and Rajasasana (Royal Decree) are the four legs of law, but the Rajasasana is the highest. This is an important departure from Manu's system wherein the Smritis are the highest. Kautilya makes the king the highest authority for promulgating law. Kautilaya's revolutionary dictum was that whenever Sacred Law came in conflict with national law, reason should prevail. Kautilya like Manu suggested punishment to criminals on caste basis, though in general his punishments, to the lower castes are less severe. While Manu was not for awarding capital punishment to a Brahmin convicted of a serious crime (he suggested only a banishment from the country). Kautilya suggested death penalty for a Brahmin found guilty of treason.

Kautilya's knowledge was encyclopaedic and it ranged from king, council of ministers, civil and criminal law, war, diplomacy and inter-state relations. He is often charged with championing the 'policies of expediency' and is called the Indian Machiavelli to whom the 'end justifies the means'.

In Ancient India there were tribal Republics, monarchic kingdoms and Empires and all of them contributed to the making of the political life of our country. All the periods were not 'Golden'. There were periods when there was a strong good government and there were periods when a multiplicity of states of varying sizes and conflicting ambitions were fighting with one another. But when a correct perspective is taken of the whole of Ancient India, one finds that there is much in it that we may feel proud of and much that became a model for subsequent times.

Thiruvalluvar

Thiruvalluvar, a great poet of the Sangam Age expresses his view on Kingship in his famous work, 'Kural.' According to

many historians the first three centuries of the Christian era form the Sangam Age. There is a close resemblance between the Kural and Kautilya's Arthasastra. As in the Arthasastra, the King is described as possessing the Six Angas, such as the army, people, wealth, council, friendship and fortresses. Together with the King himself, the list makes the total of the Seven Angas of Royalty. The King should be accessible and should speak softly and pleasantly. The happiness of his subjects should be his happiness. Even rainfall depended upon the King ruling according to the principles of Dharma. The need for consultation is emphasised and the qualifications and duties of the chief officers of state are dwelt upon in the manner of the Arthasastra. Similarly on ambassadors, forts and the army, Thiruvalluvar is in line with Kautilya. The Tamil Sage poet's remarks on espionage are more or less similar to Kautilya's views. 'A spy and a book of laws are the eye of a king.' Though the Kural emphasises the absolutely corrupting and ruinous character of absolute power, it subscribes to the theory of royal omnipotence by making the King responsible even for rainfall. But the high moral tone of the Kural is opposed to the opportunism, and the Machiavellian precepts of the Arthasastra; it is in conformity with the maxims of the Dharmasastras. Thiruvalluvar declares that material prosperity is worthless, if there is no identity of interests between the King and his subjects. While the Arthasastra supports benevolences or forced loans, the Kural regards the sovereigns raising them as no better than robbers.



Fig. 5. Thiruvalluvar

Mahatma Gandhi

Of modern Indian thinkers, Mahatma Gandhi had the utmost influence on the outside world. Gandhiji has been

described as the greatest man since Jesus Christ by Rev. Holmes of America; he certainly was India's greatest since the Buddha. He represented Indian idealism at its best. He was able to liquidate the British Empire in India by his non-violent struggle. 'And without a sword and shedding not a drop of blood, he won the mighty war of Independence. It was a Miracle of Peace in an Age of Nuclear Weapons.' All his life he fought evil with good and in the true spirit of love. *Satya* (Truth) was his God; *Ahimsa* (non-violence), his creed. He regarded violence to be the opposite of the spirit of truth. Inflicting physical injury or saying an unkind word, even thinking ill of others, were serious



Fig. 6. Mahatma Gandhi

violations of Ahimsa. To deserve the name of a non-violent hero, one must love his opponent and pray for him even when attacked. No wonder many Christians see in Gandhian doctrines a reflection of Christian thought. *Roman Rolland*, the French

pacifist and author was attracted towards Gandhiji and he wrote a world famous biography of Mahatma Gandhi. On reading this biography, *Madelaine Slade (Miraben)*, the daughter of an English Admiral, gave up a life of luxury to live in the Ashram of Gandhiji.

Gandhiji was the only man who applied the technique of Truth and Ahimsa to a national struggle and demonstrated its success. Though he loved all the peoples in the world and belonged to humanity, he was essentially an Indian. He loved his country and his religion Hinduism more than anything else. Indian Nationalism was no doubt influenced by European Liberal thought, but its main inspiration was Indian Cultural Renaissance. *Raja Ram Mohan Roy* who advocated Western type of education saw no contradiction between European Liberalism and the intrinsic values of Hindusim. *Bal Gangadhar Tilak*, the first man to proclaim that 'Swaraj is my birth right' was more influenced in his political philosophy by the 'Bhagavad Gita' than by Western Liberalism. Even *Jawaharlal Nehru* who adopted Western habits regarded Indian cultural heritage as the driving force behind unity and progress. Gandhiji gave a distinctive character to Indian Nationalism by having a proper blend between the imported concepts of liberty and unity and the developing ideals of Indian culture.

Mahatma Gandhi wanted political and social development to go hand in hand, and considered social reform essential for political and economic progress. Even while he was engaged in the Freedom Struggle, he presented his famous *Constructive Programme* which was for the improvement of all classes of people. The six features in his philosophy of life, namely, political, social, economic, educational, religious and spiritual progress find a place in Constructive Programme. Gandhiji believed that the Western Civilisation had taken a wrong turn. He called upon his countrymen to choose those elements from Western culture which were essential for their progress. The spirit of the century was to be reconciled with that of the country.

Mahatmaji's ideas about an ideal government are interesting to study. After freedom he wanted our leaders to set up, *Rama-*

rajya' or the 'Kingdom of Rama', which was to be based on principles of universal morality, and in which justice, righteousness and the will of the people were supreme. He wanted the richmen to regard themselves as trustees of wealth and help the poor and finance humanitarian undertakings. He advised the capitalist to regard the employee as his brother in a common family concern. If that was done, he felt there would be no conflict between rich and poor and capital and labour.

By proving the efficiency of Satyagraha, Mahatmaji has done a great service to the world. Some leaders in other countries following Gandhiji have adopted his technique to achieve their objects. *Martin Luther King* in the American South conducted a movement for the establishment of Civil rights based on the Gandhian concept of non-violence. The movement has met with success and there has been a distinct improvement of the rights of the Negroes in the U.S.A. Martin Luther King acknowledged his debt to Gandhian thought and literature. In Nazi Germany, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer* who was impressed with Gandhiji's Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930, studied Gandhian philosophy and technique and wanted to employ Gandhian technique against Hitler's tyranny, but political conditions in Germany prevented him from attempting it.

ADMINISTRATION—CENTRAL

Kautilya's 'Arthasastra' is the cumulative expression of a long period of political speculation and thriving. The work was composed in the Mauryan age and the Mauryan Administration was set up on the basis of that work. As Kautilya was the Chief Minister of Chandragupta, he must have had a share in the shaping of the Mauryan administration. A study of the Mauryan system of government will remove the deeprooted misconception that the ancient Indians had achieved their best in the sphere of thought only and that they had failed in that of action. It will make us realise that in the art of government we were in no way inferior to any people in any part of the world. We will now deal with some important administrations.

Mauryan Administration

The chief authorities for the Mauryan Administration are: Kautilya's 'Arthasastra', Megasthanes's 'Indika' and 'Asokan inscriptions'. At the top of the government stood the Emperor, assisted by a Ministerial Council known as the Mantri-Parishad. He lived in a spacious palace built in an extensive park studded with fish ponds. Its underground passages, collapsible doors and hollow pillars indicate that it was built with a view to overcome sudden dangers. Precautions against fire and snakes were taken.

The kitchen was in a secret place; there was a host of ladies to see that the food was not poisoned and entry and exit to kitchen were strictly scrutinised. The Emperor led a strenuous life. His night and day were each divided into eight parts, in each of which he had to attend to some particular function, such as hearing the reports of spies, checking accounts, inspection of the army, conferring with the ministers, or discoursing with the learned. The king went out on three occasions, to hunt, to offer sacrifice and to administer justice. He had a bodyguard of Amazons who accompanied him during his hunting expedition. Chandragupta gave up hunting only when he became a Jain towards the end of his reign.

The Mauryan king was a benevolent despot. There were no constitutional checks on his authority; there were only moral checks. He attempted to rule the country according to the Dharmasastras with the aid of the Royal Purohit. As Kautilya says in the Arthasastra 'In their (people) happiness lies his happiness, in their welfare his welfare.'

The king knew that if he ruled as a tyrant, there would be a revolution and his life would be in danger. The king was so afraid of assassination that he did not sleep in the same bed room for two nights together. He employed spies to keep him informed of traitors. The secret service of the Mauryas included male and female spies. The Emperor celebrated his birthday, solemnly washing his hair in the river and holding a Durbar. People from distant parts of the Empire used to flock to Pataliputra to witness the imposing ceremony when nobles and officers presented the Emperor with costly articles.

Gladiatorial fights, horse and oxen races were held on that occasion.

The Ministerial Council that helped the king in the administration of the Empire consisted of the Purohit, the Commander-in-Chief, the Treasurer, the Revenue Officer, and Yuvaraja or the Crown Prince. War and peace, appointment and transfer of Provincial Governors were discussed and decided in this council. There were several departments of administration, each under a Superintendent with a large clerical staff.

One important feature of the Mauryan administration was the establishment of a permanent department to take the census within the Empire. It was not a decennial (every ten years) affair as now. It was a permanent thing. With a view to form a reliable estimate of the material condition of the people and to secure a proper basis for taxation, the Mauryan rulers seemed to have taken the census every year.

The chief sources of revenue were, land revenue which was $\frac{1}{6}$ of the gross produce, tolls and fines, licence fees from workmen, artisans and traders, charges on the manufacture of liquor, tax on the slaughter houses' sales, income from mines, forests and other state property, special taxes and benevolences. The chief items of expenditure were the palace, the army, relief for the famine stricken and irrigation works. According to Rudradaman's Girnar Inscription, Pushyagupta, governor of Chandragupta Maurya in Gujarat built the Lake Sudarsana and it was repaired by Tushaspa, governor of Asoka. The Mauryas constructed roads connecting Pataliputra with the North-West frontier, the Deccan and other parts of the Empire.

Petty civil and criminal cases were decided in villages by the Panchayats and in towns by Guild Courts. Bigger cases were tried by Gopas and Sthanikas. Above the local courts were two sets of Public Courts, Inferior and Superior. In the inferior Court there were six judges; three were well versed in law and three familiar with the customs and usages of the people. It tried mainly civil cases. The Superior Court also had six judges and it was more concerned with the affairs of the artisans. The emperor was considered to be the fountain of Justice and trial cases came to him. Punishments were severe

and death penalty was given for even trivial offences. Mutilation, torture and shaving of the hair were some of the punishments awarded. Asoka humanized the administration and reduced the severity of punishments. He allowed criminals condemned to death a respite of three days so that they might make peace with their Creator. He also released some prisoners on his birthday.

Some of the harsh features of the Mauryan administration were removed by Asoka. Buddhism was made the official religion of the Empire but Asoka followed a policy of religious toleration. Rock Edict XII is a classic in religious toleration, showing the broad mindedness and grandeur of Asoka. In his Edicts Asoka asked the Rajukas or Governors to work for the welfare and happiness of the people. Emphasis was laid on governmental activity and guidance with a view to the promotion of popular welfare. Public servants were required to be honest and energetic and do justice to the people.

The Mauryan Emperor kept a large army consisting of infantry, cavalry, chariots and elephants. The Army was controlled by a War Office consisting of 30 members divided like the Municipal Council of Pataliputra into six Committees of five each. Four of them looked after the four divisions of the army; the fifth looked after their supply; and the last maintained a number of boats and ships and secured the safety of the coast and rivers.

The Mauryan polity was a highly centralised bureaucracy, that is, a government carried on by an Emperor with the help of a large band of efficient public servants. That such an excellent system was established by the Mauryas so early as the 4th century B.C. shows that India had made as much progress in politics and administration as in philosophy and religion. The separation of civil and military services, permanent census, municipal administration by committees and extensive government functions, were some of the excellent features of the Mauryan administration.

The only defects of the Mauryan administration were the award of cruel punishments for even ordinary crimes and the use of espionage. But it may be pointed out that even in Britain, until the beginning of the 19th century, severe punishments were

given for ordinary crimes. It was Sir Robert Peel who humanized the criminal law of England in 1830. Regarding espionage, all countries are making use of it on a large scale even to-day. Nazi, Germany and Fascist Italy made use of the Gestapo and Ovra respectively, which were secret service organisation. It has already been noted that much of the severity of the Mauryan administration was removed by Asoka, the Buddhist Emperor.

Mughal Administration

Nature of Mughal Government: The 'Aini Akbari' or Institutes of Akbar of Abul Fazl gives a complete account of the institutions, civil and military of Akbar's Empire. The Official Hand-books prepared in the time of Shah Jahan and Aurangazeb, the works of Muhammad Khan. Abdul Hamid Lahori, Nizam-uddin and Badami also give us valuable information about Mughal Administration The writings of foreigners such as Jesuit Missionaries, Sir Thomas Roe, Hawkins and Bernier as well as the factory records of the English East India Company throw light on some aspects of Mughal Administration.

The Mughal rule was in the nature of a military rule and the Mughal administration was a centralised depotism. To the Muslims the Emperor was both the head of the State and the Church. To the non-Muslims he was only their temporal head. Sir Jadunath Sircar regards the Mughal administration as the Persio-Arabic system in Indian setting. The principles of the government, the departmental arrangement and the very titles of the officials were of foreign origin, but a few principles of the system prevailing in India were also embodied in the Mughal administration. The existing Indian practice and the customary law were followed so long as they did not run counter to Islamic principles. Generally speaking the foreign model was found in the Imperial Court and among the higher official circles.

The Mughal Government was military in its nature, for all the civil servants were Mansabdars or members of the army. With the exception of the Sadr Sudr (Religious Officer) the officials of the Empire were all military commanders. The Mughals, however, made use of the old Hindu Revenue system in the country and employed Hindu Revenue Officials.

The Mughal Government was a centralised despotism at the head of which was the Emperor. As the Government was highly centralised, the written records multiplied. It was therefore humorously called a *Kaghazi Raj* or *Paper Government.*

Central Government: The Mughal Emperor was the head of the government. According to Islamic theory, the Emperor was only the ruler of Muslim subjects. He was responsible to the Muslim public for his conduct. There was no limit to his authority. The only limits to his authority were customary law and fear of rebellion.

Both Babar and Humayun ruled according to the Islamic theory of kingship, but Akbar rejected it. He treated all his subjects alike and ruled as a National Monarch. His greatness was due to his religious tolerance in an age of religions intolerance. But like all contemporary kings he believed in the Divine Right Theory, that the king was superior to all human beings and was the representative of God upon earth. Jahangir followed to some extent the tolerant policy of his father, but Shah Jahan and Aurangazeb rejected Akbar's ideal of kingship and adopted the Islamic theory of sovereignty.

There was no definite law of succession to the throne. Generally, the son succeeded the father, but it was not always the eldest son. Humayun, Akbar and Jahangir were the eldest sons who succeeded their respective fathers, but while the succession of Humayun and Akbar was peaceful that of Jahangir was complicated by the candidature of his own son, Prince Khusru. Khusru rebelled against his father with the help of the Sikhs under Guru Arjun, but it was put down and later he was killed. Shahjahan was the eldest surviving son of Jahangir, Khusru and Parviz having predeceased him, but he had to contend against the machinations of Nurjehan to make Shariyar, the youngest son to become the Emperor, as he was her son-in-law. Aurangazeb was the third son of Shahjahan and the way by which he disposed of his other brothers and seized the throne during his father's lifetime (imprisoning Shahjahan in the Agra Fort) is so well known.

It must be noted that the Mughal Emperor did not recognise any Khalifa as his overlord. The Kutba was read in the name of the Emperor and coins were also struck in his name.

The Mughal Emperor worked hard. He transacted state business in public, sitting in the Diwani-Khas of his palace. He had a number of ministers like Wazir or the Prime Minister and the Mir Bakshi or the Pay master and officials to assist him, but it was not necessary for him to consult them on all occasions. It was an one man rule and Aurangazeb was his own Prime Minister.

Though the Mughals were foreigners and were absolute, they set up certain traditions and conventions which made them popular. The Emperor's Dharshan gave an opportunity to the people to present petitions to the Emperors. Jahangir's 'Chain of Justice' was used by the aggrieved people to get justice at the hands of the Emperor. The inspection tours and pageants throughout the Empire served to bring the Emperor and the people in close touch with each other.

The Mughal Emperor was the fountain of all justice. He was the highest court of appeal and sometimes acted as the court of first instance too. In Mughal times there was no codified law, nor was there a Supreme Court of Justice to finally lay down the law of the country. There were three separate judicial agencies, namely, courts of religious law, courts of secular law and political courts. The Courts of Religious Law were presided over by the Qazis who decided cases according to Islamic Law. Islamic Law had not changed from the days of the Prophet. It was considered sacrilegious to change it according to the needs of the country. The Courts of Secular Law were presided over by the Mughal Officers. Political courts presided over by the Emperor's Officers tried cases like treason and rebellion.

The Revenue administration of the Mughals was set up by Akbar who copied Shersha's Revenue System. In the Mughal system, land was divided according to its fertility and assessment of revenue was based on the produce. One third of the gross produce was the revenue and if it was felt to be too high

individual cultivators could make an appeal to the Emperor (The Mauryas collected only $\frac{1}{6}$). Ryotwari system, that is, direct relations between the cultivators and the government prevailed in Mughal times. The farmer could pay the revenue either in cash or in kind. The settlement of the revenue was fixed for ten years in order to avoid unnecessary interference by officers.

The Mansabdari system of the Mughals was the basis of the civil and military administration of the country. The system was introduced by Akbar who borrowed it from Persia. The term 'Mansabdar' was generally restricted to those who were high officials. There were many grades of Mansabdars. Some of them commanded 10,000 men, some of them a smaller number. For raising troops which were mostly cavalry (infantry and artillery being of little account) they were paid salaries by the Mughal Emperor. The post of the Mansabdar was not hereditary. The appointment and advancement of a Mansabdar depended entirely on the will of the Emperor.

The Mansabdari system had a number of defects: (1) Sometimes there were false musters of men and horses and though Akbar was able to check the evil by enforcing the maintenance of descriptive rolls of men and the branding of horses, his successors failed to control the evil. (2) The warriors were loyal to the Mansabdar and not to the Emperor, as they were recruited by the former. There was a gulf between the Emperor and the bulk of the army. (3) Importance was given to the cavalry; infantry and artillery were neglected. The Mughal army under the Mansabdari system was not an efficient one. If Akbar had faced the Marathas with his army, he would have fared the same fate as his great grandson, Aurangazeb.

British Administration

British administration in India underwent a number of changes from time to time. From the Treaty of Allahabad of 1765 to 1857, the Indian territories were administered by the East India Company's servants. The Regulating Act of 1773 and the Pitt's India Act of 1784 established some kind of Parliamentary Control over British administration in India. Indian territories were ruled by the Governor-General and his Council.

After the Great Revolt of 1857 the Indian Dominions were placed under the direct rule of the British Crown. The Viceroy, on behalf of the British Crown ruled the country with the help of an Executive Council. The Secretary of State for India, a member of British Cabinet exercised control over the Viceroy. Owing to the agitation carried on by the Indian National Congress from 1886 several acts were passed by the British Parliament liberalising the administration and giving more appointments to Indians. The famous August Declaration of Edwin Samuel Montague, Secretary of State for India, in 1917 promised the gradual introduction of responsible Government in India and the increasing association of Indians in every branch of administration. On the basis of that declaration the Government of India Act of 1919 (or the Montford Reforms) was passed. The Act was rejected by the Congress; only non-congress parties supported it. The Congress at its Lahore Session in 1929 passed a resolution of Purna Swaraj or Complete Independence of India. Mahatma Gandhi launched his Civil Disobedience Movement to achieve Purna Swaraj. The British Government, to satisfy public opinion in India summoned Round Table Conferences in London between 1930 and 1933 and the recommendations of the Conferences where published in a White Paper. On the basis of the White Paper, The Government of India Act of 1935 was passed by the British Parliament. On the eve of August 15, 1947 when India became free, the British Administration was based on the Government of India Act of 1935. We shall now deal with the main features of the 1935 Act regarding Central Government.

Till the year 1935 the Secretary of State for India and the India Council in London exercised considerable influences over the policies of the Government of India. By the Act of 1935, the Secretary of State became only a Guardian. The India Council in London was abolished and the Secretary of State was given a body of Advisers.

In India, the Act of 1935 set up a Federation at the Centre and autonomy in the provinces. India was to be a federation, the federating units being Governor's Provinces, Chief Commissioner's Provinces and Indian States. Dyarchy was abolished in

the provinces and Provincial autonomy with a Government responsible to an elected legislature was set up in each Governor's Province. In the centre a federal executive of a dyarchical nature was set up, but as the Indian states refused to join the Federation, the federal part of the 1935 Act did not come into operation. The Viceroy became the head of the British Provinces as well as the Indian States. The Viceroy did not interfere in the internal affairs of Indian States. Only misgovernment leading to law and order situation invited Viceregal interference in the affairs of an Indian State. Foreign policy, Defence and Communications were the responsibility of the Viceroy. The Viceroy consulted a chamber of princes in dealing with the relations between the Paramount power and the Indian States. Over the British provinces the Viceroy carried on the administration with the help of an executive council. Indians were chosen to the Viceroy's council. There was a Central Legislature consisting of an Assembly and the Council of State. But the Viceroy had special powers to certify bills rejected by the Legislature and Veto bills approved by the legislature. A number of items in the Budget cannot be debated in the Central Legislature. The Viceroy continued to enjoy supreme power in the Indian Continent.

The Central Legislature consisted of a Federal Assembly and a Council of State. The Assembly had a strength of 250 representatives of British India. There was communal representation for Muslims, Christians and Sikhs. The Council of State, consisting of 156 members was partly an elected and partly a nominated body. The term of the Assembly was five years but the Viceroy had the right to dissolve it earlier. The term of each member of the Council of State was not to exceed nine years and one-third of its members would retire every three years. Thus it was a permanent body. Both the Houses of the Central Legislature had co-ordinate powers in legislation and in finance.

There was a Federal Court consisting of a Chief Justice and not more than six judges. The judges were appointed by the British Crown and held office till the age of 65. The functions of the Federal Court were (i) to decide disputes between provinces, and between provinces and the Central Government

and, (ii) to hear appeals from High Courts on fundamental questions of law regarding the interpretation of the constitution.

In the provincial field there was some real transfer of power to the people's representatives but in the Centre the Viceroy's authority was not reduced.

It must be noted that the British Administration was efficient and a great part of the credit should be given to the noble band of I.C.S. Officers, rightly characterised by Lloyd George as the 'Steel Frame of British Administration.'

Indian Constitution—Central Administration

The Republican Constitution of India inaugurated on 26th January 1950 is the work of the Indian Constituent Assembly. The Assembly contained a galaxy of constitutional experts. Once, freedom was won, Jawaharlal Nehru requisitioned the aid of the most brilliant men in our country, irrespective of party affiliations and the constitution produced by them is therefore a truly national document. Men like Dr. Ambedkar, Sri N. Gopalaswamy Aiyangar, Sri Alladi Krishnaswamy Aiyar, Sri K. M. Munshi, Muhammad Saadulla and others took a leading part in the shaping of our Constitution The final draft was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on November 26, 1949 and the Republican Constitution was inaugurated on January 26, 1950. The constitution has therefore been devised by Indians and is designed to serve the needs of India and to meet the particular characteristics and genius of the Indian people.

India is a Sovereign Democratic Republic. It is a union of States and may be called a federal Constitution. But it is more unitary than federal, for more power is given to the centre. The constitution has certain Fundamental Rights for the citizens. These rights are enforceable by the courts. There are also Directive Principles of State Policy, to help the establishment of a social order in which there shall be social, economic and political justice.

The Central Government at Delhi, also called the Union Government consists of the *President, Vice-President, Prime Minister* and *Council of Ministers, Union Legislature, Union Judiciary* and *Union Public Service Commission.*

The Executive Head of the Indian Union is the *President*. Any citizen of India who has completed 35 years of age and who is not holding any office of profit under the Government of India or of any State, is qualified to stand for the Presidency.

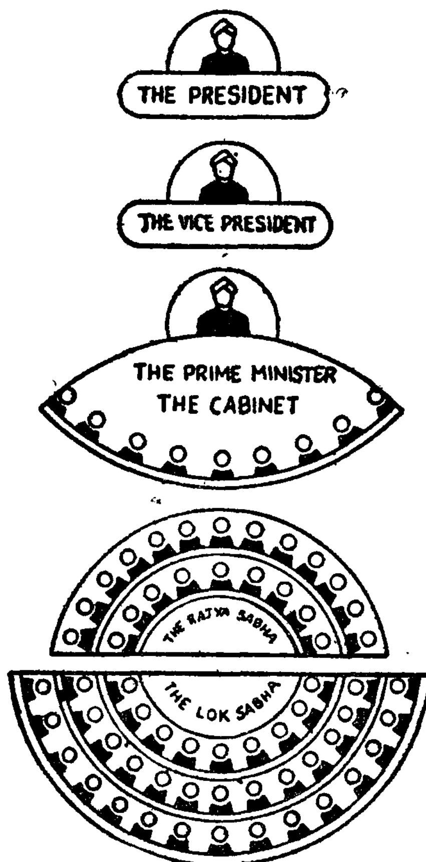


Fig. 7. Central Government

The President is elected by the elected members of both Houses of the Union Parliament and the elected members of the Legislative Assemblies of the States. The election is by the system of proportional representation and single transferable vote. The President is elected for a term of five years. He can stand for re-election. His salary is Rs. 10,000 per month,

The President is the *dejure* head of the Indian Union but the *defacto* head is the Prime Minister. The President appoints the Prime Minister and on his or her advice other Ministers, Governors, Ambassadors, Chief Justices, Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts, Chairman and Members of the Union Public Service Commission etc. He summons, prorogues and dissolves Parliament. His *assent* is necessary for the validity of laws passed by the Union Legislature and State Legislatures. He has also the right to grant pardons and reprieves or remissions of punishment.

It must be noted that our Government is a cabinet type or Parliamentary type on the British model. Though in theory, the President has a formidable list of powers, he exercises them only on the advice of the Prime Minister.

The President has some emergency powers. When the two Houses of Parliament are not in session, the President may promulgate an ordinance which has the same force as an Act of Parliament. The ordinance must be placed before the Parliament, as soon as it reassembles, and it ceases to have validity at the end of six weeks from the reassembly of Parliament. The President has been given extraordinary powers to meet an emergency. If the President is satisfied that a grave emergency exists, he may, by proclamation, make a declaration of emergency. It shall be laid before each house of Parliament. It ceases to operate at the end of two months unless approved by both Houses of Parliament.

During the operation of the emergency proclamation, the Constitution functions entirely on a unitary basis. The President has power to take over the administration of a State on receipt of information from the Governor of a state that a grave emergency has arisen.

The President can be removed during his term of office by impeachment. A resolution on impeachment can be moved in either House of Parliament. But the resolution to be accepted must secure not less than two-thirds of the total membership of the House. When a resolution is passed by one House, the other House enquires into impeachment charges and if as a result of

the investigation, a resolution is passed supporting the impeachment by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the total membership of the investigating House, the President can be removed from office.

The *Vice-President* is elected by the members of the two Houses of Parliament by proportional representation and single transferable vote. Any Indian citizen who has reached the age of 35 is eligible for election. The Vice-President like the President holds office for a term of 5 years. He is the ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha and he draws salary in that capacity. (The office of the Vice-President carries no salary.) In the event of the serious illness of the President, the Vice-President acts for him and in the case of the President's death, he acts as President until a new President is elected. The Vice-President may be removed from office by a resolution passed by a majority of the members of the Rajya Sabha and accepted by the Lok Sabha.

The *Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers* form the most important organ of the Central administration. The Prime Minister is appointed by the President and on his or her advice, the other Ministers are appointed by the President. The convention is that the President should appoint only the leader of the majority party in the Lok Sabha, or if there is no single majority party, any leader who can command the confidence of the Lok Sabha. The Council of Minister is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha. Every Minister should be a member of parliament. The Prime Minister should be a member of the Lok Sabha.

The *Union Legislature* or the *Parliament* consists of the *Lok Sabha* or *House of the people* and the *Rajya Sabha* or the *Council of States*. The *Lok Sabha* consists of 542 members directly elected by the voters in the states. Any person who has completed 21 years of age can vote in parliamentary and state elections. A candidate to the Lok Sabha election should be at least 25 years of age. The Lok Sabha elects its own Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

The Lok Sabha can legislate on all subjects in the Union list and the concurrent list. A Bill, other than a money Bill

may originate in either the Lok Sabha or the Rajya Sabha. A Bill shall be deemed to have passed only if both Houses agree to it. In cases of disagreement a joint meeting of the two Houses will be summoned by the President and the decision of the majority is accepted.

A Money Bill can be introduced only in the Lok Sabha. It is then sent to the Rajya Sabha which can make amendments, but the Lok Sabha can reject them. Thus in Money Bills the Lok Sabha has the ultimate decisive voice.

The *Rajya Sabha* consists of 238 elected and 12 nominated members. Those who have made a mark in the field of literature, science or art or social service are nominated. The 238 elected members are elected by the State Legislative Assemblies. Any citizen of India who is not less than 30 years of age can stand for election to Rajya Sabha. While the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha are elected by Lok Sabha, the Vice-President of the Republic is the ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. Only the Deputy Chairman is elected by the members of the Rajya Sabha.

The Rajya Subha is a permanent chamber, not subject to dissolution. The members are elected for 6 years, one-third retiring after every second year. The Rajya Sabha has less power than the Lok Sabha as already indicated.

Members of Parliament, whether of Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha draw each a salary of Rs. 500 per mensem besides allowances.

The Supreme Court

The Supreme Court is the highest judicial body in our country. It interprets the constitution and gives advice on any matter referred to it. It has original as well as appellate jurisdiction. Its original jurisdiction is confined to disputes between Union and the States and between the states themselves It decides cases on fundamental rights and on appeals from the High Court of States.

The Supreme Court consists of a chief Justice and 13 other judges. Judges can be removed by the President on an address passed by each House of Parliament. The address in each house

of Parliament should be passed by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting.

The Chief Justice is paid Rs. 5000 per mensem and the other judges are paid each Rs. 4000 per mensum. Their salaries and allowances are a definite charge on the Government of India and are therefore non-votable by parliament.

Democracy is a government by amateurs. People choose their rulers not because they are efficient, but because they are popular. Ministers are men of experience and they bring their vast experience to bear on the problems of the country. Further being in touch with the people, they know the needs of the country. In every democracy Ministers lay down the policy but the actual administration is left to a galaxy of civil and military officers. These officers are recruited by an independent body known as the Union Public Service Commission.

The Chairman and members of the Union Public Service Commission are appointed by the President. They hold office for a term of 6 years or until they attain the age of 65 years whichever is earlier. The Commission conducts every year a competitive examination to recruit candidates for the Indian Administrative Service and other All India Services. The Commission is required to submit a report of its work to the parliament every year. The salaries and allowances of the Union Public Service Commission are not votable by the Parliament.

ADMINISTRATION—LOCAL

Under the Cholas

Local self-government had been existing in our country from very early times. The Pataliputra Municipal Administration under the Mauryas described vividly by Megasthenes in his 'Indica' shows the vitality of self-governing institutions in Ancient India. But perhaps the best local administration was that which prevailed in Chola times. The Chola local administrative system became the model for the Mughals and the British. In the Chola Administrative system the lowest unit of administration was the Kurram, a union of several villages.

Sometimes it consisted of a single village. If the Kurram was a 'Brahmadesa' or a gift to the Brahmins it was known as 'Chathurvedi Mangalam'. The affairs of this Brahmin village were controlled by an assembly known as the *Mahasabha.* The affairs of the Kurram were managed by the *Urar* an assembly consisting of people of different castes. Two iscriptions at Uttiramerur of the time of Parantaka I and 14 inscriptions at Ukkal throw considerable light on the composition and functions of the Mahasabha. It may be inferred from them that the Urar exercised more or less similar functions. The Urar had fiscal, judicial and administrative functions. It was empowered to sell land, to receive the purchase money and to pay the state dues out of the interest on it, to clear forests, to drain swamps and to bring new lands under cultivation. If any plot of land was not properly cultivated, the Urar had the right to transfer it to competent persons. It collected the taxes due to the Adhikaris or government officials. It maintained a treasury of his own and its accounts were regularly audited by the Adhikaris. Many cases of misappropriation of public funds are referred to in the inscriptions.

The Urar received deposits of money and grants of land for charitable purposes and administered the trusts by a Board of Commissioners appointed from year to year. It transferred lands to corporations such as Temple Authorities. The judicial functions of the Urar were exercised by a Nyaya Committee of the Assembly. It decided civil and criminal cases and meted out punishment according to the nature of the offence. The Nyaya Committee was very often presided over by an Adhikari. The President had to carry out the decision of the Committee. This South Indian institution may be compared with the Anglo-Saxon jury systems. The accused was tried as in England by his neighbours who were acquainted with the facts of the case. It cannot, therefore be held that the jury system was the special birth right of Englishmen only.

The Nyaya Committee distinguished between intentional and unintentional crimes and inflicted punishment according to the nature of the crime. Capital punishment was meted out for intentional murder and the usual penalty for unintentional

murder was the maintenance of two or three perpetual lamps in the village temple for the special benefit of the victims. For administrative purposes the Urar was divided into several Committees or Variyams each of which attended to a particular function. The Nyayavariyam, as already pointed out, administered justice; the Tottavariyam looked after flower gardens; the Dharmavariyam was in charge of charities and temples; the Erivariyam looked after tanks; the Ponvariyam was a currency committee; and the Gramakariyavariyam supervised the work of all committees. The size of the Urar and the number of Variyams depended upon the area and population of the Kurram. The members of the committee were known as *Variyaperumakkal* and those of the Urar as *Perumakkal* Committee members held office for one year. Service on the gramakariya committee required previous experience on other committees.

The committees were constituted on a fair basis. The kurram was divided into *Kudumbukal* or wards, each of which sent a list of the names of proper persons who would be chosen for the committees. Any one of the following qualifications was necessary for a committee member:

1. Possession of more than one-fourth Veli of tax paying land and of a house built on one's own site;
2. age above 35 and below 70;
3. knowledge of Mantarabrahmana and the ability to teach it;
4. possession of $\frac{1}{8}$ veli of land for one who has mastered one Veda and a Bashya;
5. general business capacity and irreproachable character. Any one of the following was a disqualification for membership of a committee: (1) killing a Brahmin or a woman or a cow or a child; (2) adultery with the wife of a spiritual teacher; (3) drinking liquor; (4) theft; (5) relationship with a man of the above vices; (6) relationship with a village accountant who had failed to render accounts;
6. anyone who had undergone the humiliating punishment of 'riding on an ass.'

All the tickets containing the names of suitable persons from a ward were put into an empty mud pot and were shaken well. A small boy had to take a ticket from it and give it to the village priest who would receive it on his palm with his fingers open and would read out the name. Similarly one more member would be chosen for each of the several wards. This is the famous *Kudavolai* system of election. In this system the two Athenian principles of election and lot may be noted. Membership was annual and no member could be re-elected continuously for more than 3 years. The strict rotation of office gave everyone of the villagers a chance of acquainting himself with the details of village administration. Usually a committee consisted of 6 to 12 persons.

Under the British

We have seen how the Chola system of local Administration was really an exercise in democracy. Under Muslim rule in spite of constant wars and conquests, the villages were being administered in the old way. After the decline of the Mughal Empire when confusion prevailed throughout India, local self-governing institution did not function properly. When the British became the rulers of the country, they turned their attention to improving local self-government. The first attempt was made in 1871 to improve the education, sanitation and communications of the localities with the help of district or area committees. But the system did not work well as the areas were too large and members of committees were ill equipped for the task. Lord Ripon the Viceroy, therefore laid down his plan for local self government in 1882. He wanted the sub-division not the district, as the area to be served by a committee. There should be smaller areas below the subdivision. If the area was small, each member might have an intimate knowledge of it. Ripon also wanted that the members of the Boards administering the areas should be non-officials including the chairman. Ripon's views were unfortunately not accepted by the Secretary of State. The Local Self-government Act as finally passed in Ripon's time, set up the District Boards under the chairmanship of the District Magistrates. The Secretary of State's point of view was efficiency, but Ripon's desire was to give Indians political and popular education.

Up to the time of Ripon, in big towns there was a Municipal Committee nominated by the government with the District Magistrate as Chairman. Ripon introduced the principles of self-government in Municipal administration as in the case of District or Rural Boards. Acts were passed in various provinces providing for the compulsory election of a Chairman. In the beginning, the District Magistrate was elected as the Chairman Later non-official Chairmen were elected.

The principles laid down by Lord Ripon, elected councillors and an elected chairman were accepted only in course of time. After a number of experiments, early in the 20th century a uniform pattern was set up for 'all corporations and municipalities' The main features of this pattern were a large proportion of elected members and a strong independent executive authority who was a government nominee, with safeguards for checking of accounts. The government had always a right to interfere in cases of gross mismanagement.

It will be seen from above that Lord Ripon's idea of entrusting municipal administration to the will of the local inhabitants was not fully realised. There was the official element in local self-governing institutions. The Montford Constitution of 1919 carried out fully the intentions of Ripon. Local self-government according to the Government of India Act of 1919 became a 'Transferred Subject' The Municipalities and Local Boards were given increased powers and were freed comparatively from official Control. They came to have elected chairman except in some rare cases where expert knowledge was required. The Provincial governments did everything to help the progress of local self-governing institutions in towns and rural areas. Education and sanitation improved in local areas as people's representatives took an interest in local administration.

VI. RELIGION AND INDIAN CULTURE

Introduction

India is a land of many religions and the Indians are noted for their religious spirit. From very ancient times, Indians cared more for their achievements in the spiritual rather than the material field. Therefore India became a vast treasure house of spiritual knowledge which is enshrined in the various scriptures such as Upanishads, Bhagavadgita, Dharmasastras, Ramayana, Mahabharatha etc. Indian philosophy contained in the Upanishads has been considered by Scopenhauer, a German Scholar 'not only the solace of his life but also as the solace of his death.' It is the religious temperament of the Indian people which made them accept Gandhiji as the leader of the freedom struggle by non-violent methods. Gandhiji was able to rouse the Indian masses only by appealing to their religious sense. Besides Hinduism which is the major religions of India, we have here the followers of almost all the religions of the world such as Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism etc. Therefore a proper understanding of the Indian civilization is almost impossible without a knowledge of the various religions which are prevalent in our country.

The Religion of the Indus Valley People

Continuity of culture is perhaps the most characteristic feature of the Indian civilization. It is remarkable that the gods and goddesses worshipped by the Indus Valley people (3250—2750 B.C.) are still worshipped by the Hindus. Thus the Indus people worshipped the figure of a male god sitting in a yogic posture and surrounded by animals. The figure has been found in one of the seals. Since it is sitting erect in yoga pose, it is identified with *Siva* of later day Hinduism. Siva is also called as *Pasupathi* meaning Lord of animals found around the figure of the above God make us infer that it must be *Pasupathi.* The two horns of the God might have become the trisula of Siva later on. Further a number of stone figures resembling the *Sivalinga* have also been discovered in the Indus Valley. From that we may

infer that *Siva* was worshipped by the Indus people in the form of *Linga* also.

Many figures of the Mother-Goddess also have been unearthed in the Indus Valley cities. The Mother-Goddess is represented on pottery, seals and armlets. In one seal, a goat and a man with a knife are found near the Mother-Goddess. From this some scholars infer that animal sacrifice was also made to goddesses. In one of the figures a tree is coming out of her womb. Perhaps it represented a fertility goddess. Mother-goddess worship seems to have been more popular than the worship of male gods among the Indus Valley people.

In addition to *Siva* and *Shakti*, the Indus Valley people also worshipped trees, animals and spirits. *Naga* or *Serpent* worship was very popular. Bulls, tigers, rhinoceros, elephant, crocodiles seem to have been worshipped. The existence of the miniature clay models of these animals suggest the worship of the same. The representation of single Trees, and Trees with human form suggest the worship of Trees. It is significant to note that Hindus even now worship the bulls, cows, nagas and trees. The figure of the *Swastik* Symbol and the wheel in some of the seals make us believe that Sun was also being worshipped symbolically at least, if not really.

VEDIC RELIGION

Early Vedic Period

The Aryans of the Early Vedic period seem to have followed a simple and plain religion. They worshipped several gods and goddesses which were no more than the forces of nature. They deified them because of the tremendous powers they exhibited. These forces were later on divorced from the objects they had originally represented and worshipped by themselves. The gods of the Rig Vedic period numbered thirty three.

Father *Dyaus* (Sky), the shining God of Heaven, and the Mother *Prithvi*, the mother goddess were among the oldest deities of the Aryans. They were later on overshadowed by *Varunu*, the God of Sky and *Indra*, the God of thunder and rain.

Varuna was the most sublime God of the Vedic Pantheon. He was the embodiment of truth and righteousness and guardian of the moral and cosmic order (rita). He was conceived as the omniscient ruler of the universe, from whose watchful eye, no sinner could escape. People turned to him for forgiveness of sin. He was also the controller of the cosmic waters. Therefore the Aryans who took to agriculture as the major occupation turned to him for the boon of rain. He was supposed to preside over ' weather, seas, wells, rivers, streams etc.

Indra was the god of war, who with his weapon of thunderbolt destroyed the forts of his enemies. Therefore he was called as *Purandra* and Aryans invoked his blessings for the destruction of the huge forts of their enemies. He was also supposed to fight with the atmospheric demons called *Vritras*, smite them with his thunderbolt, release the rainwaters stolen by them and make them fall into the streams and rivers. Thus he occupied the primemost place among the Vedic gods. In the later day Hinduism, Indra became a minor deity presiding over the paradise of bliss where heroic souls go for enjoyment after death.

The *Sun-God* was worshipped as a separate God at each stage of his heavenly course. At the dawn it was worshipped as a charming goddess called *Ushas*. The *Gayatri mantra* uttered by every Brahman at the sunrise is in praise of *Ushas*. Sometimes after the dawn it was worshipped as *Pushan* (the Nourisher), *Vishnu* (the wide-striding Sun), and *Savitri* (Enlivener), the *Asvins* were the twins representing the two horses which dragged the chariot of Sun. They became Gods of healing later on.

Agni or fire was the next important God. He was considered as the messenger who conveyed the offerings of devotees to the various gods. Therefore the Aryans made their offerings to the gods only through the Fire. Animals, gold, silk, grain were thrown into sacrificial fire with the hope that they would be carried to the respective gods to whom they are offered. Indeed, without Agni, no Vedic form of worship, or ritual was possible. Fire, like rain is indispensable for day to day life and it seems to have been worshipped both for its constructive as well as destructive powers.

Soma was the god of liquor, worshipped for its inspiring qualities It was a juice prepared from the roots of Soma plant which grew on the slopes of Himalayan mountains. At the time of sacrifice and war the Aryans drank the liquor and danced with joy. Soma sacrifice became the centre of Vedic ritual for it was offered to Gods at all rituals or sacrifices.

There were also many other minor gods such as *Vayu* (God of Wind), *Maruta* (Storm God), *Rudra* (God of Thunder), *Parjanya* (God of Rain), *Saraswathi* (River Goddess) etc.

Abstract qualities like anger were also personified and worshipped as gods Thus Faith was worshipped as *Sraddha* and anger as *Manyu* *Prajapathi* was the Lord of Creatures, *Viswakarman* was the Lord of creation and *Vidhatri* the ordainer of the Universe

As Prof. Maxmuller says, 'Everything that impressed the soul, with awe or was regarded as capable of exercising a good or evil influence on man, might in the Vedic age still become a direct object not only of adoration but of prayer.'

Thus the Rig Vedic Aryans worshipped the personification of the phenomena of Nature There were no temples, no altars and no hereditary priesthood Every householder was himself a priest. He propitiated the gods by throwing the offerings in the fire. The gods were human in form and mostly males. Only very few female goddesses were worshipped. They believed in life after death and talked of the *Pithruloka* (Land of the Ancestors) where the souls went after death and rewarded and punished by *Yama* the king of the dead according to the nature of their deeds. They do not seem to have believed in the idea of rebirth. Though they worshipped many gods, ultimately they realized the existence of one supreme force activating all the created worlds. So they declared '*Ekam Sat Baghuta Vadanti*'—god is one but it is described differently by different sages (Rig Veda, Mandal X, 82). Thus we find in the Rig Veda a tendency towards monotheism amidst the apparent polytheism.

Later Vedic Period

During the later Vedic period, the religion of the Aryans had undergone a great and significant change. The old gods

such as *Varuna*, *Indra* and *Surya* are relegated to the back-ground and were replaced by the Trimurthis called *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Siva* conceived as the creator, preserver and destroyer of the Universe. *Rudra*, an early Vedic God was identified with the local god of vegetation and was termed as *Siva*. He soon came to be regarded as the Great God (Mahadeva) and the lord of the animate beings (Pasupati). He also came to be known as *Sankara* or one who destroys everything. *Vishnu* a solar god of early vedic period was raised to the position of *Varuna* and was regarded as a sublime deity, the source of cosmic and moral order, the preserver of the universe, the deliverer of people from all distress and sufferings His place or residence called *Vaikuntam* or *Paramapadam* was considered to be an abode of infinite bliss and became the goal of all his devotees. The *Prajapathi* of early vedic period became the Brahma of later Vedic age. The worship of *Vasudeva* identified with *Vishnu* and later with *Krishna* also became popular during this period. Minor deities such as *Gandharvas*, *Apsaras* and *Nagas* were also worshipped. Worship of trees, rivers and local godlings also became popular. Belief in evil spirits and the employment of charms and spells to control them, the use of mantras or magic formulae to cure diseases etc. paved the way for the growth of popular Hinduism.

During this period sacrifices and domestic rituals became more and more elaborate and complicated. The importance of sacrifice was magnified without any proportion, and it was believed that even gods were subordinate to them. If properly performed gods must obey the man. Elaborate hymns were to be uttered at the time of sacrifice and even a slight mistake in uttering them was enough to doom him for ever. Meticulous care was taken in the performance of sacrifices. Therefore the necessity for a separate priestly class called *Brahmanas* arose. Since sacrifice was considered as omnipotent, the Brahmans who performed them came to be respected in the society more than anybody else. A regular science of sacrifice developed. There are references to sacrifices which went on for several years and required the services of seventeen priests. Domestic rituals were described in the *Grihya Sutras* while the duties of the householder were elaborated by the *Dharmasastras*. The duties to be performed by a man were termed as *Varnasrama Dharma*. *Varna Dharma*

consisted in the duties of the four castes while *Asrama Dharma* described the duties of man as a student (Brahmacharya asrama) householder (Grihastha), forest dweller (Vanaprastha) and hermit (Sanyasa). Truth, performance of duty (Dharma), respect for parents, love of fellow beings and abstinence from theft, murder and adultery were considered as the hall mark of good life.

During this period, there arose some *Rishis* who became fed up with ceremonies and pondered over the ultimate problems of life such as birth, death, life after death etc. They composed *Upanishads* which contain the quintessence of Indian philosophy. They distinguished between the perishable body and matter and the imperishable *Atman* residing in every body. The *Atman* or soul though tiny is part of the cosmic soul permeating the whole universe. These *Jivatmas* enter into innumerable bodies and pass through the cycle of births and deaths owing to the effects of their *Karmas* or actions. So every one must perform good actions and overcome the effects of bad actions. Then one must give up good actions also and devote oneself to the investigation into *Brahmam*, the all pervading supreme soul. By proper practice and discrimination individual soul can merge with the cosmic soul even as salt melts into sea-water. When it is accomplished, the soul attains *Moksha* or deliverance from reincarnation Thus the Upanishads created new doctrines in Hinduism such as *Karma* theory, (that everyone must suffer or enjoy for his actions) transmigration of souls, rebirth and *Moksha*. They were common to both Buddhism and Jainism Asceticism or renunciation of the worldly pleasures was glorified during this period as it was believed that only by non-attachment to this illusory world and its pleasures one can attain the Brahman the everlasting intelligence full of bliss (*Sat, Chit, Ananda*)

Epic Period

During the period of the Epics, the *Mahabharatha* and *Ramayana* the concept of *Avatar* entered into Hinduism It was believed that Vishnu took ten *Avatars* or *Manifestations* in order to save the world from the menace of *Rakshasas* or evil geniuses '*Dushta Nigraha* and *Sishta Paripalana*' (Punish-

ment of the wicked and Preservation of the righteous) was the aim of all incarnations. Vishnu took the form of a fish (Matsyavatar) tortoise (Kurmavatar) man-lion (Narasimha-vathara) and so on, to punish evil doers. During the period of *Mahabharatha*, he took the form of *Krishna*, the friend, philosopher and guide of the *Pandavas* the righteous. He helped the *Pandavas* to destroy the *Kavravas* who were the embodiment of evil. Krishna exhorted Arjuna to fight against his own relatives, as a part of his duty. His teachings to Arjuna have been elaborated in Bhagavad Gita which may be regarded as the Bible of the Hindus. It talks of four methods to attain salvation. Ordinary people can attain Moksha by doing their duties prescribed by scriptures without worrying about the results. Work without expectation of reward is called *Nishkamya Karma.* The practice of this is called *Karma Yoga*. One can attain *Moksha* by completely surrendering to God and paying devotion to Him. It is *Bhakti yoga* (path of devotion). By practising various methods of controlling the body and mind one can attain the same goal. It is *Raja Yoga* (the path of discipline). Lastly one can attain Moksha by the path of pure intelligence i.e. by investigating into the true nature of *Atman* and *paramatman* and contemplating over it. It is called the *Gnana Marga* or the path of discrimination.

During the period of Ramayana, Vishnu incarnated Himself as the benevolent king *Rama* in order to destroy the demon king *Ravana* *Rama* embodied in himself all the good qualities of a man The teachings of sage *Vashista* to him is known as *Vashistam* which is as valuable as Bhagavadgita.

Growth o1 Hinduism

Rama and *Krishna* became gods to the Hindus who built temples for them all over India. Rama's devoted servant *Hanuman* also became a god More and more gods and goddeses came to be included in the Hindu pantheon. Vishnu's consort became the goddess of wealth, *Lakshmi*. There are *Ashtalakshmis or* eight kinds of Lakshmi The consort of Brahma became *Saraswathi* the goddess of learning Uma the consort of Siva became a goddess of benefaction. When she became angry and indulged in destruction she came to be known as *Kali* or Durga. The Bengalis are ardent worshippers of Kali. Thus *Shakti* (the

primordial energy) the consort of Siva is worshipped in various forms. In Tantric worship a young damsel is worshipped as Kali. Sexual energy is sublimated into spiritual energy in *Tantric rituals*. The sons of Uma, known as *Skanda* and *Vinayaka* also became separate gods to Hindus. *Skanda* is described as *Karthikeya* with six faces. He is identified with *Murugan*, the god of the Tamils. Murugan is worshipped as the embodiment of beauty, youthfulness, divinity and fragrance. His vehicle is peacock and his banner contains the cock. He is described in Kandapurana as a destroyer of demons and preserver of Devas (angels). *Vinayaka* the elephant-headed God is another son of *Siva* and *Uma*. He is worshipped as the God of wisdom all over India. It is customary to remember him before starting any work because he is supposed to have the powers of removing all obstructions. His another name is *Vigneswara* meaning the remover of all obstacles.

The worship of all the above deities, the separate rules and regulations for each one of them gradually led to the formation of different sects in Hinduism. The worshippers of Siva established *Saivism*. It throve much in Kashmir. The worship of Siva as a dancer (*Nataraja*) at the time of the destruction of the world has become very popular in Tamil Nadu. *Periapuranam* in Tamil describes the devotional activities of 63 Saivite saints called *Nayanmars*. There are Saivite *Agamas* in Sanskrit which prescribe rules and regulations for building of temples and performance of *pooja* to the *Sivalingas* in temples. Like Bagavadgita, Saivism also talks of four paths of attaining godhood. *Sariyai, kiriyai, yogam* and *gnanam*. Of these the *kriya* or *Bhakti Marga* is considered as more important and easier in the modern days of stress and strain. The *Kapalikas* and *Bairagis* advocate asceticism as the best path. God Siva is called as *Pathi* and the individual soul is called *Pasu*. When the Pasu is freed from *Pasam* or attachment to this world it reaches the feet of God Siva and enjoys supreme bliss.

The worshippers of Vishnu established a separate sect called *Vaishnavism*. Sri Ramanuja of Tamil Nadu popularised Vaishnavism. It was he who systematized the methods of worship and organized the devotees into one scet. *Srirangam*

became the spiritual capital of *Srivaishnavites*. Before him the *Alwars* popularised Vaishnavism in Tamil Nadu by their soul thrilling devotional songs. The Bhakthi movement thus started during the Pallava period and gained momentum during the Imperial Chola period. During the Muslim period *Ramanand* and others popularized the worship of Rama while *Chaitanya* and *Mirabai* spread the *Krishna Cult* among the people. The saints of Maharashtra popularized the cult of *Vittoba*, who is also another form of Vishnu Thus Vaishnavism took various forms in various places. Some among the Krishna worshippers indulged in sexual aberrations and spoiled the name of Vaishnavism. Originally Vaishnavism preached the worship of one God and castelessness among the devotees.

Both Vaishnavism and Saivism broke up into many small sects in course of time. Thus among Vaishnavites of Tamil Nadu there are two sects namely *Vada Kalai* (North oriented) and *Ten Kalai* (South oriented). Among Saivites there are the *Vira Saivites* of Karnataka and *Adi Saivites* of Chidambaram.

Worshippers of Lord Subramanya or Kumara organized themselves into a seperate sect known as *Kaumaram*. The worshipping of Lord Ganesa or Vigneswara is called as *Ganathipathyam*. The sun worship is called *Souram* The worship of Sakthi is called *Saktham*. Thus there are six major sects in Hinduism, namely *Saivism*, *Vaishnavism*, *Saktham*, *Souram* *Kaumaram* and *Ganathipathyam*.

There are three major philosophies in Hinduism, the *Advaitha* of Sankara, the *Vishistadvaitha* of Ramanuja and *Dwaitha* of Madhwacharya. Sankara taught Monism and declared that there is only one Reality, *Brahman*. The *Tirimurthis*, the universe and its creatures are the same as *Brahman*. It is owing to ignorance and illusion they appear to be different. When knowledge or *gnana* dawns every soul will realize itself as the cosmic soul, *Brahman*. According to Ramanuja, the individual soul is distinct from *Parabrahmam* or the cosmic soul. By devotion or *Bhakli*, a soul can reach *Vaikunda* the abode of Narayana and attain His feet which is supreme bliss. But the soul can never become one with *parabrahmam*. Madhwa condemned the monism of Sankara and maintained that the human soul, Vishnu or god

and matter were quite distinct. Human soul can be saved only by the grace of Vishnu. Evil and impure souls are predestined to damnation.

In spite of the bewildering variety in the Hindu religion there is an underlying unity. The Hindu gods are related to one another. They are in fact a family of gods and therefore while a devotee is worshipping his particular god develops no animosity towards other gods. He treats them as relatives to his own god. Further he thinks that all the gods are different manifestations of the *parabrahmam* the supreme soul. Rig Veda and Gita teach tolerence and declare that even as all rivers go towards the ocean and become one with it, so also all religious sects lead to the same goal. All the Hindus perform the same kind of rituals in the temples and in their houses during marriages, funerals etc. The performance of Sraddha (ceremony to propitiate ancestral spirits) is a must for every Hindu. They believe in the *Karma* theory, theory of rebirth and Moksha. They believe in heaven (Swarga) and hell (Naraga). They have faith in the holiness of certain rivers like Ganges and pilgrim centres like Benares and Rameswaram. They have thus common pilgrim centres, common gods and common festivals such as *Diwali* and *Navarathri*. They have the common epics, Mahabharatha and Ramayana and the 18 puranas which they enjoy hearing from Bagavathas. They believe in the Varnashrama Dharma though its evil effects are given up at present.

The ideals of all Hindus are the same all over India. They are four in number i.e. *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama*, and *Moksha*. Every Hindu is expected to follow the *Dharma* or the duties enjoined by the Dharmasastras. Though the caste rules and taboos prescribed by them are obnoxious, by and large the ethical code prescribed by the Hindu scriptures are wholesome. Emphasis is placed on chastity, hospitality, honesty, piety, charity, patience, freedom from envy, freedom from greed, compassion, love, forgiveness, tolerence and doing one's duties without any thought of reward. The second ideal is *Artha* or the art of acquiring wealth and power by righteous methods, for after all without wealth worldly life is not possible. Thirdly, *Kama* or the enjoyment of the pleasures of flesh within certain limits. Hinduism is not a religion which condemns worldly pleasures outright. Though it

extols a sanyasin's life, the householder also is praised and he is asked to live a life of charity, piety and usefulness to others. The final goal of every Hindu is the attainment of *Moksha* which will come by practising non-attachment to this mundane world. It will come automatically during the old age when man retires from active life. During that period one can attain Moksha by performing *Nishkamya Karma* or selfless service to others, or by *Bhakthi* or *Yoga*, or *Gnana*. These are the four *Purusharthas* or ideals of Hinduism in which every Hindu worth his name believes in. Since there are no prophets, Bible or set rules in Hinduism the methods to realize the ideals are chosen and adopted by every Hindu according to his own individual taste and choice.

BUDDHISM

Buddhism, like Islam and Christianity is one of the great world religions of modern times. It is the religion of millions of people living in the South and South East Asian countries such

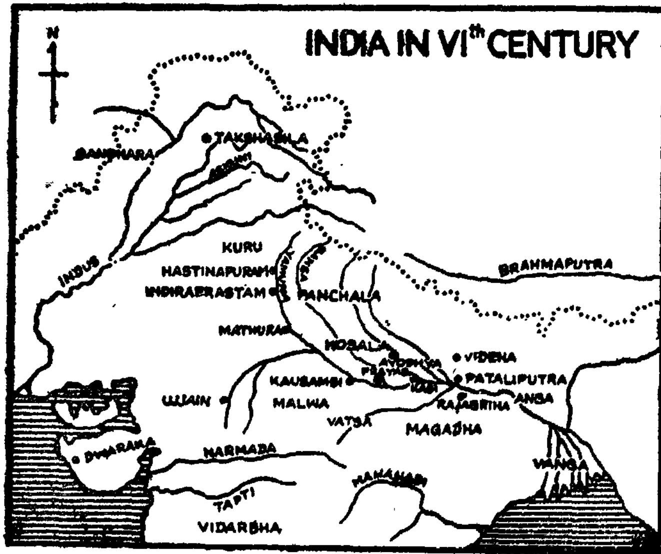


Fig. 8. India in VI century

as Japan, China, Burma, Indonesia etc. But it was in India, it was born and reared. It arose in India, along with Jainism as a

sort of reform movement to correct some of the evils which crept into the Hindu religion. The ceremonies prescribed by Vedas and Smritis were too costly and cumbersome for an ordinary man. The sacrifice of useful animals such as sheep, cows and bulls in the name of god, was revolting to many a tender heart. The philosophy taught by Upanishads was too subtle to be understood by the ordinary people A sort of middle path was needed by every one and that was Buddhism. It was easy to practise and unlike Hinduism, it was open to all irrespective of the caste to which he or she belonged. Thus it catered to the specific needs of India in the 6th century B.C.

Gautama Buddha

Gautama Bnddha, a contemporary of Mahavira was the real founder of Buddhism, though previous Buddhas such as *Konakanuni* are spoken of by tradition. He was the son of Suddhodhana, the chief of the Sakya clan of Kapilavastu in Nepal Tarai. His mother was Maya Devi, who gave birth to Gautama in 567 B.C. and died seven days after. Earlier, i.e. when she had conceived, she had a peculiar dream in which she was taken to a divine lake in the Himalayas, where she was bathed by divine damsels, and then a great white elephant with a lotus flower entered her side. Astrologers interpreted the dream as signifying the birth of an universal emperor or teacher to her. Therefore Suddodhana wanted to bring up his son as an emperor rather than allowing him to become a saint. He surrounded the prince with all the comforts and conveniences of life. He was married to an accomplished princess, Yasodhara who gave him a child called Raghula. Life was full of pleasure for both of them. But, as



Fig. 9. Gautama Buddha

destiny would have it Siddhartha by chance came across an old man with tottering steps, a sick man shivering with fever and boils all over the body, a corpse followed by mourners and an ascetic who was full of peace and happiness. The first three sights revealed to him the hollowness of the worldly pleasures and the reality of misery all around. His inquisitive mind wanted to find out the causes for suffering in the world. The calm face of the ascetic attracted him. Therefore after the birth of his son, he left his palace in the midnight and went into the forest. Thus he renounced the world at the age of twenty-nine.

After leaving the palace, he wandered aimlessly and searched for truth. He sat under the feet of some Brahman teachers, and heard their discourses. But he was not satisfied with them. He then entered into the Uruvela forests and performed severe penances. His body was reduced to a mere skeleton. But even then he could not find out the truth. Therefore he gave up his austerities and began eating food, given by a peasant girl. His five companions on seeing it, left him and went away. He then sat under a pipal tree and resolved not to stir out until he got enlightenment. Mara the god of love tried to tempt him in vain. After 49 days of meditation Gautama got the answers for his problems. He became enlightened and understood the cause for suffering and the method to remove them. Thereafter he came to be known as the Buddha or the Enlightened. The tree under which he got enlightenment came to be known as the Bodhi tree, or the tree of wisdom.

After his enlightenment Buddha went to Benares, where he gave his first sermon at the Deer park. His five companions who left him earlier, were convinced of his greatness and became his first disciples. They were soon joined by fifty young ascetics. He and his disciples wandered far and wide and spread the gospel of Buddhism. Kings like Prasenajit of Kosala, Bimbisara and Ajatha Satru of Magadha extended their patronage to him. He advised them that true conquest was not that of violence but was conquest by love, mercy and compassion by which the good-will of the people could be earned. Rich people came out to contribute their mite to the propagation of his ideas. One Ananda Pindika a rich merchant gave him 540 million gold

coins. Amba Pali, a courtesan donated him with a grove. Vishaka a widow contributed 270 million gold coins. Buddha utilized this amout to build viharas or monasteries for monks. Buddha became popular since he prevented people from sacrificing animals in the name of gods. People simply adored him as Bagavan (God) Buddha. For over forty years the Buddha preached his doctrihes and then breathed his last at Kusinagara at the ripe old age of eighty. When his body was cremated there was a virtual scramble among dignitaries to have a share of his ashes.

Teachings of Buddha

Like Mahavira, Buddha also taught that the goal of life is to attain Nirvana or liberation from the cycle of births and deaths. Birth and sorrow are caused by desire and when all desires cease one is freed from rebirth. Thus he declared the 'Four Great Truths' as follows :

1. Life is full of sorrow.
2. Sorrow is caused by desire.
3. Unfulfilled desire causes rebirth.
4. When desire ceases, rebirth ceases and that is Nirvana or liberation.

How to overcome desire is the next question asked by an aspirant. Buddha answered it by saying that desire could be overcome by following the Eight fold path, namely

(1) Right Faith (in the four great Truths) (2) Right Thought (3) Right Speech (4) Right Action (5) Right Livelihood (6) Right Effort (7) Right Watchfulness (8) Right Contemplation.

This eigth fold path was a middle course or Madhya marga which was neither extreme asceticism nor total indulgence. It is a practical code of Ethics, which can be observed easily by everyone. Some German scholars have suggested that Buddha's teachings were a sort of escapism from the difficulties of life. They are of opinion that Buddha's teachings would lead to laziness and inactivity since he wants to put an end to all cravings.

They point out that without a deep craving or desire, no achievement is possible, in this world. But, their assumptions are far from true because Buddha has advocated positive action in the place of negative inaction. He placed before his followers ten commandments to be scrupulously practised. They are purity of conduct, truthfulness, love and benevolence, obedience to parents, respect for elders, non-drinking, charity and kindness to all living creatures. Of these the last one was the essence of all his teachings. It was nothing but Gandhiji's doctrine of Ahimsa or non-injury to all, in thought, word and deed. His whole life was permeated by his doctrine. He himself personally interfered and saved thousands of animals from being sacrified to Gods. But he did not carry his Ahimsa doctrine to the extremes like Mahavira. He allowed meat-eating on certain conditions.

Like Mahavira, Buddha also did not talk about God, Hell or Heaven, believe in the authority of the Vedas and the caste system. But he believed in the karma theory and declared that behind every happening there is a cause. As a man sows he reaps. One cannot escape from the evil effects of sinful acts. So also by performing good actions one could become happy. By One's own effort one can free himself from the cycle of births and deaths. Intermediaries are of no value.

Buddha organized monasteries in which the monks lived and practised Buddhism. There were also a few nunneries. But the nuns were not allowed to talk to the monks alone. Monks and nuns were expected to lead very simple and austere lives. They should obstain from all kinds of injury to living beings, covetousness, sensuousness, false speech, drink, over-eating, singing, dancing, using garlands, jewellery and perfumes, using a high or broad bed and receiving gifts of gold and silver. Strict celibacy was enforced on all of them. They must shave their heads completely, put on yellow dress and take oaths of fidelity to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangah.

Growth of Buddhism

Even during the lifetime of Buddha, his doctrines had a large following. It was due to various reasons such as the

simplicity of his teachings, moderation, patronage extended by kings, democratic nature and last but not the least, the endearing and magnetic personality of Buddha himself. After the Nirvana of Buddha, the First Buddhist Council was held in 483 B.C. near Rajgriha to compile the teachings of Buddha. About 500 monks took part in the council. Ananda, the first disciple of Buddha recited and compiled the *sutta pitaka* or the book of law dealing with the sermons of Buddha as heard by him. Pitaka means the basket of law. Upali another disciple of Buddha recited and compiled *Vinaya pitaka* or the book of law dealing with the rules and regulations governing the conduct of the monks and nuns.

A century later disputes arose among the monks with regard to the observance of certain rules. They were particularly devided on the point whether they should accept gold or silver from patrons or not. Therefore a second council was convened at Vaisali in 383 B.C. The council could not arrive at any consensus regarding monastic discipline. Therefore a schism arose among the followers of Buddha. Those who accepted the vinaya pitaka were called as *Sthaviras* or *Theravadins* and the rebels were called as *Mahasanghikas*.

The third council was held in 250 B C. at Pataliputra under the patronage of Asoka. The council was presided over by Moggaliputta Tissa. It aimed at ending all kinds of divisions among the Buddhists. It made a new classification of the Buddhist canonical tenents by the addition of a third pitaka called *Abhidhamma pitaka* which contained the philosophical interpretations of the teachings of Buddha. The Theravadin school of Buddhism or Hinayanism (Little Vehicle) was accepted as the true religion of toe Buddha. Those who did not accept it were expelled from the Buddhist church.

The fourth council was held during the regin of Kanishka in Kashmir under the leadership of the great Buddhist scholars Vasumitra and Asvaghosa. It was attended by 500 monks. The council tried to settle the disputes between the various sects of Buddhism. It also compiled commentaries called *Vibhaskas* for the three great pitakas.

During the period of Harsha (6th & 7th century) Buddhism became the state religion and was spread all over India. The Nalanda university trained Buddhist monks, not only from India but also from the countries of South and South-East Asia.

Thus Buddhism was lucky to have the patronage of three great kings of ancient India, Asoka, Kanishka and Harsha. Under their patronage Buddhism spread not only to the various parts of India but also, to the neighbouring countries such as Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Loas, Cambodia, China, Japan, Indonesia etc. Chinese travellers such as Fahiaen, Hiuen Tsang and Itsing visited India to see the holy places connected with the Buddha.

Mahayanism

The early Buddhism called Hinayanism was very much different from its later development called Mahayanism or the Great Vehicle. Hinayanism did not talk about God and did not advocate the worship of God or the Buddha. It taught that one should attain salvation by ones own effort. It however allowed the worship of some of the articles connected with Buddha and his remains such as his umbrella, his shoes, stupa (tomb of his ashes) the Bodhi tree etc. But in course of time the Buddhists began to worship the image of Buddha himself. During the period of Kanishka and after, the images of Buddha were made in large numbers, after the model of Greek Gods. A new art which was a mixture of Indian and Greek systems of sculpture arose in India. It was known as Gandhara school of sculpture.

Temples were built for the Buddha, processions were held and festivals were organized in honour of him. Flowers and fruits were offered to the image and incense was burnt before it. Along with the Buddha, Bodhisatvas or perfected individuals who were semi-divine were also worshipped. It was believed that Bodhisatvas would shoulder the results of all sins performed by the devotees and lead them to heaven. The original self-reliance was given up and dependence on intermediaries arose. Conception of heaven (Sukhavati) and hell arose. The belief in ceremonies, mantra (holy syllable) and Tantra (holy rituals),

Bhaki (devotion) increased day by day. The difference between Hinduism and Buddhism became very thin owing to the growth of all these ideas. The Mahayanists themselves were divided into two sects i.e. *Madhyamika* and *yogachara* the former claiming the unreality of the world and Nirvana and the latter emphasizing the reality of Nirvana and the unreality of the world. Vasubandhu great scholar under Samudragupta belonged to the Yogachara school of Buddhism.

Decline of Buddhism

Buddhism which was once the greatest religion of India, has at long last disappeared from the land of its origin. It was due to both internal as well as external causes. Buddhism, as a religion lost its individuality and became very similar to Hinduism owing to the growth of image worship, conception of heaven and hell and rituals. Therefore people lost all their admiration for it. Hindus found no difference between their religion and Mahayanism. They freely mingled with Buddhist festivals and ceremonies. They even considered Buddha as one of the Avatars of Vishnu. Hinduism absorbed almost all the principles of Buddhism.

The revival of Hinduism by great teachers like Sankara and Ramanuja gave a death blow to Buddhism. The Advaitha philosophy of Sankara appealed to the intellectuals more than the Sunyavadha of Buddhism. Sankara himself defeated many Buddhists in disputation and established the predominance of Hinduism. The Bhakthi movement started by the Alwars, Nayanmars and Sri Ramanuja of South India appealed to the masses since it was catholic and easy to follow. The ordinary people were weaned away from Buddhism by such movements.

Buddhist monasteries in course of time became a hot bed of corruption and immorality. The monks and nuns instead of acting as guardians of virtue became purveyers of vice. They gave up the essence of Buddhism and indulged in meaningless disputation about the trifles. The undue importance given to monks in Buddhism and their depravity in practice, discredited it in the eyes of the public.

Lack of royal patronage was one cause of its decline. After Harsha or even Asoka, the kings patronised Hinduism rather than Buddhism. Pushyamitra Sunga who came after the Mauryas, Miharakula, the Hun emperor and Sasanka the ruler of Bengal were not only followers of Hinduism but also persecutors of Buddhism.

Owing to all these reasons Buddhism gradually disappeared from the major portions of India. It had a precarious existence only in Eastern India. But when Muhammed Bin Bakthiar Khilji conquered Bengal in the 1.th century and suppressed Buddhism by persecution, its death-knell was sounded. Buddhist monks and nuns of Bengal escaped to Nepal and Tibet. After that Buddhism died a natural death in India.

Contribution of Buddhism to Indian Culture

Buddhism gave to India a noble ethical code which emphasized among other things love, compassion and non-injury (Ahimsa) to living creatures, in word, deed and thought. It emphasized the importance of purity and charity in the place of meaningless ceremonies. These teachings of Buddha produced such great kings as Asoka, Kanishka and Harsha. Asoka, popularised Buddha's doctrines of tolerence, pacifism and service to fellow-beings. Asoka's principles of tolerenee and co-existence influenced Indian culture more than anything else and they have become the basis of India's foreign policy at present.

Buddhism influenced Hinduism to a large extent, Hindus copied the Buddhists in building temples and worshipping their Gods in the human form. The vegetarianism of the high caste Hindus was borrowed from the Buddhists. The numerous Muts (monasteries) established by Saivities and Vaishnavites all over India derived their inspiration from Buddhist viharas. The various chatras or rest houses, hospitals, pinjarapoles and go shalas built by Hindus were influenced by the example of Asoka. The habit of sacrificing animals to God was slowly given up by the Hindus only due to the teachings of Buddha,

Buddhism gave a fillip to vernaculars or local languages as the monks spread the gospel of Buddhism through the mother-tongue of the people.

It also made immense contribution to Indian art and architecture. The stupas at Sanchi with its gorgeous sculpture, Bharhut and Amaravathi, the pillars of Asoka, the cave temples of Kanheri (Bombay), Karla (Poona) and Nasik are considered to be the best specimens of Indian art. So also the paintings at Ajanta, Bagh and Sigiria (Ceylon) have earned world-wide fame.

Buddhism has vastly influenced the culture of the South and South-East Asian countries and is still a living religion in many of those countries.

JAINISM

Origin

Jainism is one of the oldest religions of India. According to Jain tradition, it was originated by Rishaba, who was the first Tirtankara or prophet. Tirtankara means one who can help people to cross the ocean of births and deaths. The name of Rishaba is mentioned in the Rig Veda. Vishnu Purana and Bhagavata Purana refer to him as an avatar (incarnation) of Narayana. The twenty-third Tirtankara is said to be one Parsava, who lived 250 years before Mahavira. He was a kshatriya by birth, and was son of Asvasena the king of Kasi. He renounced the world after ruling his country for 30 years and practised meditation. He got enlightenment after 84 days of meditation. He attained the state of Kaivalya (free from all bondages) and taught the people not to tell lies, not to injure any one, not to steal and not to possess any property. These were the original teachings of Jainism.

Mahavira: (599-527 B.C.) Vardhamana Mahavira was the 24th Tirtankara of Jainism. The Jains regard him as the real founder of Jainism. He was born of a kshatriya family ruling at Kundagrama near Vaisali (Magadha). His father was Siddhartha, the head of the Kshatriya clan of Jantrikas and his mother was Trisala- a Lichchavi princess of Vaisali. After his education he was married to Yashoda and had a daughter by her. But

he renounced them at the age of thirty and became an ascetic. After twelve years of severe penance he attained enlightenment, and was recognized as Jina (conqueror of the senses) and Arhat (great). For the next thirty years he preached his doctrines in Kosala, Magadha, Videha and Anga. Kings like Bimbisara and Ajathasatru patronized him. His followers were known as Nirganthas (free from bonds). He died at Pava (Patna district) at the age of seventy-two.



Fig. 10. Mahavira

Doctrines of Jainism

Mahavira and his parents were originally the followers of Parsava. Mahavira improved upon the doctrines of Parsava and made it into an organized religion. According to him, attainment of Moksha (liberation from the cycle of births and deaths) is the goal of life. It can be attained only by following a strict code of ethics. House-holders must observe the five vows of non-injury (ahimsa), speaking the truth (satya), nonstealing (astaya), non-possession (aparigraha) and non-adultery (brahmacharya). They must also possess the Tri-ratnas (three jewels) of Jainism, Faith in Jina, knowledge of his doctrine and prefect conduct. The monks must perform severe austerities or Tapas and purify their souls. They must observe celibacy and renounce all worldly comforts. They must pluck off their hairs completely and observe frequent fasts and ultimately die of complete starvation. In order to remove the attachment to the body, one must even discard clothing. They must practise extreme ahimsa in their daily routine. They should not boil the water lest the germs living in it should be killed. They should wear a veil over the nostrils so that germs in the atmosphere would be prevented from entering into the nostrils and dying there. They should have a broom of peacock feathers in their hands and sweep the floor while walking, so that they might not trample upon tiny creatures and kill them.

the prescription of such severe austerities to his followers, was due to the nature of the philosophy of life preached by Mahavira. According to him the whole universe is made of perishable matter and imperishable Jivas or souls. Not only men but also animals, plants and stones possess Jiva. Jivas are born again and again in this world and the others because of the samskaras (impressions) created in them by their Karma (actions). The Jiva which is originally full of bliss and purity becomes thus overcoated with impurity due to Karma. This impurity can be removed only by performing austerities, of which non-injury is the most important. When the Jiva becomes pure by Sadhana (spiritual practices) it becomes Arhat or Paramatman (great-soul), which is the reservoir of infinite bliss, knowledge and power. The realisation of the true self is Jivan-Mukthi. One who attained Mukthi will be freed from the cycle of births and deaths because he is free from all bondages which produce the births.

Mahavira did not believe in the existence of God and the creation of the universe by Him. According to him the universe is eternal. The so-called gods are only so many perfected souls. He also rejected the authority of the Vedas, Vedic rituals and the supremacy of the Brahmans.

Growth of Jainism

Mahavira had a large following even in his life-time. Kings like Bimbisara patronized him. He had eleven disciples called Gandharas or Heads of schools. After his death Arya Sudharman one of the Gandharas, became the head of the Jain church. He was succeeded by Jambu and others. During the reign of the last Nanda the Jain church was ruled by two theras (pontiffs) Sumbhutavijaya and Bhadrabahu who wrote Kalpsutra, describing the history of Jainism. These men perfected the Jain scriptures consisting of fourteen purvas. During the reign of Chandragupta Maurya, a terrible famine took place in Bihar, which lasted for twelve years. As a result of the famine, a set of Jain monks headed by Bhadrabahu and accompanied by Chandragupta Maurya migrated to the Mysore region in the south. The Jains who remained in Bihar organized the first Jain council at Pataliputra about 300 B.C. under the headship of

Sthulabhadra, a disciple of Sambhutavijaya. They compiled the Jain doctrines into 12 Angas. The followers of Bhadrabahu, when they returned to Magadha refused to accept the 12 Angas as genuine and objected to their habit of wearing white garments. Since they insisted on nakedness as the hallmark of a Jain they were called Digambaras (sky-clad) and the other group came to be known as Swetambaras (white clad). Thus the first schism arose in the Jain order. The 12 Angas of Swetambaras were further revised in 512 A.D. in the second Jain Council held at Valabhi in Gujarat, headed by Devardhi Kshamasramana Only 11 Angas were codified, in the language of Ardha-Magadhi. In course of time further splits arose in the Jain religion. One of the sects was devoted only to the worship of Jain scriptures. They were called as Jerapanthis among Swetambaras and Samaiyas among the Digambaras.

Jainism spread itself into the various parts of India, in course of time. Bhadrabahu and his disciples spread it into Karnataka and from there it spread to farther south. Some of the Tamil Sangam works such as Naladiar were composed by Jain monks. In the first century B.C. Ujjain became a great centre of Jainism. Nandas and some of the Mauryas patronised it at Magadah. Kharavela popularised it in Kalinga. During the Kushan period it flourished at Mathura. The Guptas patronised it and it became stabilised in Central and Western India. In the reign of Harsha it spread to Eastern India. From the 5th century onwards many royal dynastios of the south such as the Gangas, the Kadambas, the Chalukyas and Rashtrakutas patronised Jainism. King Amoghavarsha was a great Jain king of Rashtrakutas. He was the author of the famous work Ratnamalika. popular with all sects The Chalukyas of Gujarat patronised it in the 12th century. It flourished during the Muslim period also. Akbar patronised the Jain scholars.

Decline of Jainism: Gradually Jainism lost its hold on the people. They hated its extreme form of Ahimsa and severe austerities. It became divided into many sects and lost its strength. Caste system entered into it and sapped its vitality. Though there was no God, Parsava Mahavira and the Arhats came to be worshipped as Gods in the form of idols. The difference between Hinduism and Jainism became very thin.

The revival of Hinduism under the leaders of the Bhakti movement, weaned away the masses from its fold. The patronage from Kings also was lost in course of time. Therefore, except in western India and Karnataka, it lost its vital influence. In Rajputana and Gujarat it has got a few followers. Most of them are rich and donate freely to charitable activities.

Contribution of Jainism to Indian Culture

The Jains have left an indelible impression on the fabric of Indian culture. Wherever they went, they studied and developed the local languages such as Prakrit, Tamil, Pali etc. Many literary works in Tamil, such as Tolkappiam (grammar), Nannool (grammar), Jivaka Chintamani, Valaiapathi etc. were written by Jains. The earliest Kannada works were written by them. They also created some Sanskrit works on grammar, prosody, lexicography and even mathematics. Jainism also inspired wonderful art and architecture. They built stupas and temples and erected statues in them. The majestic statue of Gomateswara (70 feet high) at Sravanabelagola, the colossal reliefs carved out of rock near Gwalior, the Jain caves with their relief works and statues at Udaigiri hills, Ellora, and Hathigumpa and magnificent temples at Pavapuri, Rajagiri and Mt. Abu, the Jain tower at Chitor etc. speak volumes of the excellence of Jain art and architecture.

ZOROASTRIANISM

Zoroastrianism, a religion which arose in Persia, probably in the 6th century B.C. has got its followers mostly in India at present. The Parsis of Western India, about a lakh in number still follow the principles of Zoroastrianism though, the Persians except in the province of Fars had given it up long ago. They came into India as refugees, when Persia was overrun by the Arabs, in the 7th century A.D. According to Parsi traditions, one band of the refugees settled first at Diu, in Kathiawar and then at Thana near Bombay in the early 8th century A.D. They are a handsome people with excellent morals and character. They have contributed much to the industrial, commercial and social life of our country They are noted for their honesty and generosity. They preserve and

study their ancient scriptures, worship the fire as sacred and expose the dead bodies to vultures in the high Towers of Silence, according to their old custom.

Zoroaster

Zoroaster, the founder of Zoroastrianism was born in a middle class family of Knights, the Spitama, at Rhagas (a suburb of Tehran in Iran) a town in the ancient country of Media. The exact date of his birth is still unknown. Generally it is believed to be the year 570 B.C. or the later half of the 6th century B.C. According to Persian legend, his father was a priest in whose body the guardian angel entered through the juice of Haoma Plant, which he offered to God and his mother was a noble maid, in whose bosom a divine ray entered at the same time when the guardian angle entered the body of the priest. Out of their Union was born Zarathustra (called by the Greeks as Zoroaster) who laughed aloud on the very day of his birth. He was brought up in rural surroundings, where people subsisted by cultivation or herding cattle. Young Zarathustra had no inclination for worldly life and even as a boy he used to retire into remote mountains and forests and meditate on God. At times he acted as a priest. Often he was tempted by the Devil but to no avail. He clung to his faith sedulously in Ahura-Mazda, the God of Light, whenever he was tormented by the Devil. At last Ahura-Mazda appeared before him and gave into his hands, the Avesta the book of knowledge and wisdom and asked him to preach it to mankind. When he began preaching, there was a lot of opposition to his doctrines. He called his opponents as 'followers of the Lie' and moved from Western Iran to Eastern Iran. When he was in Bactria, its king *Vishtaspa* was converted to his creed and under his patronage it gained a firm footing there. From Bactria, the religion was carried to Media and from there to Persia where it was accepted by the Achaemenid kings. According to tradition Zarathustra lived to a ripe old age, was consumed in a flash of lightning and ascended to Firdausi, the Persian poet of the 10th century A.D. he began his mission at the age of 30, converted *Vishtaspa* at 42 and was slain at the age of 72 when the Turanians stormed Balkh.

The Teachings of Zoroaster

Zoroaster, when he appeared among the ancestors of the Medes and the Persians, found his people worshipping animals, ancestors, the earth, the Sun, bull God, Haoma etc. He found them drinking the intoxicating juice of the Haoma plant, in the name of God. He was shocked at these primitive and permissive habits of his people and began to condemn priests called Magi who were responible for them. He declared that God is one and he is Ahura-Mazda the Lord of Light and Heaven, of whom all other God were but manifestations. He condemned the old Polytheism and advocated a new monotheism, like the prophets of the Jews.

Ahura-Mazdah according to Zoroaster was the 'whole circle of the heavens' themselves. Firmament was his clothes, and the Sun and Moon were his eyes. He was later on depicted as a 'gigantic king of imposing majesty'. He is the creator of all good creatures and the supreme ruler, supporter, protector and giver of good things. He was assisted by a large number of lesser gods which were the forces of nature such as fire, water, sun, moon, wind and rain. He had seven qualities: Light, Good Mind, Right, Dominion, piety, well-being and immortality. His followers interpreted them as personal gods or immortal holy ones who created and managed this universe under the leadership of Ahura-Mazda, and began to worship them as separate Gods. Besides these Gods a number of guardian angels also were worshipped. While all these holy spirits helped men to walk on the path of virtue, there were also a number of evil spirits which led people astray. They worked under their leader *Angroa-Mainyas* or *Ahriman,* prince of Darkness and the ruler of the under-world. It was Ahriman who created serpents, vermin, locusts, ants, winter, darkness, crime, sin, diseases and all that is bad in the world. *Ahriman* had the same bad qualities as *Satan* of Christianity. Like Satan he corrupted the first man and woman who fell down from the path of virtue and lost the eternal bliss of paradise.

Zoroaster considered both good and evil as eternal. Both of them sprang together from the same primordial source which was the cause for all creation. Therefore the warfare between

them will go on to the end of time. Ultimately the good will triumph over the evil.

Of all the lesser deities the worship of Mitra, the spirit of light and Atars the spirit of Fire became popular. That is why some people wrongly describe Zoroastrianism as 'Fire worship' and the Parsees as Fire worshippers. But it is to be noted that they worship the spirits behind Water, Sun, Moon, Stars and Haoma plant also in the same strain. They believe in evil spirits such as Aka Manah (Evil Mind), Aeshma (demon of wrath and violence) and Parikas (seductive females).

Zoroaster had his own view of life after death. According to him after death, the soul hovers around the corpse for three days and then it goes across a bridge called *Cinvat* to the land of death. The good souls go to the abode of Ahura and enjoy the company of good angels; The bad souls slip from the bridge and go to a dark hell where it suffers for its sins and feed on poison eternally. The coming of a last great prophet is foretold (Saoshyant). He is the Saviour under whom will occur the Resurrection of the Dead (Freshokereti), the general judgment of souls as righteous and wicked and the great fire which will destroy and then renew the earth. Such an end of the world will occur after four epochs of 3000 years each in which Ahura-Mazda and Ahriman would alternately predominate. Finally Ahura-Mazda would win and the forces of evil would all be destroyed. The good souls would join Ahura Mazda in Paradise while the wicked would go into the hell.

Rituals: Zoroastrians had neither temples nor idols for worship. Altars were erected on hill tops, in palaces or in the centre of the city and fires were set up on them in honour of Ahura-Mazda or some other deity. Fire itself was worshipped and every family centered round the hearth; to keep the home fire burning always was part of the ritual of the Zoroastrians. The sun, the undying-Fire of the Skies was worshipped in the morning, noon and evening. Flowers, bread, fruit etc. were offered to the Gods. Sometimes animals and even human beings were sacrificed to them. Haoma juice was offered to Gods and then it was shared by the devotees. Like the Aryans, the Persians also initiated their sons to the study of Zend-Avesta

their veda, after a ceremony in which the boys were dressed in the ascetic clothes and a sacred thread was hung over their right shoulders and under their left arms. They were expected to wear the sacred thread continuously from that day onwards.

Decline of Zoroastrianism

In course of time the worship of lesser gods such as Mitra (Sun god) and Anaita (goddess of vegetation and fertility) became popular among the masses. The priests called Magi by the observance of sacred rituals, and ceromonial cleanliness, by abstention from flesh food and by wearing a simple dress, acquired unbounded influence over the people, especially kings who never did anything without consulting them. The religion lost its pristin purity after the Achaemenian kings such as Darius and Xerxes. Alexander's invasion dealt a great blow to the religion. Whole libraries were destroyed. Ir was revived to a certain extent under the Sassanian dynasty. The kings of the dynasty did much to spread the religion far and wide. The final blow to Zoroastrianism was dealt by the Arab conquest of Persia in the seventh century. The Zoroastrians were scattered all over the country and a great many of them migrated to India where they still live under the name of Parsees.

CHRISTIANITY

Christianity is now the largest and the most widely spread religion in the world, with a following of over a 1000 million. It is also a major religion in India. Some of the earliest preachers of Christianity like St. Thomas, a disciple of Christ Himself, visited India. He is said to have visited the court of Ghondophernes in the first century A.D. and converted the king into Christianity. Then he visited the Western and Eastern coasts of South India and spread his religion. But he is said to have been tortured to death at St. Thomas Mount, and buried at Mylapore, Madras. St. Thomas Church at Mylapore, Madras, seems to have been founded by him. We have in India some of the earliest sects of christianity, for example, the Syrian Christians of the West Coast. The Catholic and Protestant sects of Christianity are spread all over India. They have identified

themselves with the national interests of India and have made their contribution to the sum total of Indian culture.

Jesus Christ

Jesus, the founder of Christianity was born in Bethlehem in the land of Israel in a Jewish home. His life so affected history that historical time is reckoned in reference to his birth. The terms B.C. (Before Christ) and A.D. (Anno Domini) mean 'Before the birth of Christ' and 'After the birth of Christ.' Jesus was born according to Jewish prophecy in the line of King David, the greatest of the kings of Israel who reigned from 1055 to 1015 B.C. He was born 14 generations after king David. The riches of royalty was gone but the virtues of David still lived in this home. It is believed, Mary conceived Jesus as a virgin by a miracle of God. The foster father of Jesus was called Joseph, who was a carpenter by profession. According to traditional beliefs, at the time of the birth of Jesus, there appeared a new star in the sky, and some wise men from the East followed its track, came to Bethlehem and worshipped the child. An angel from heaven declared that the newly born child would be the Saviour of the world.

Till the thirtieth year of his life, Jesus lived in obscurity. He helped his parents and exercised himself in meditation and prayer during his leisure hours, preparing himself for his life purpose.

There was a fore-runner of Jesus. a prophet called John the Baptist, who lived a simple life and condemned the licentious and sinful life of every status, both among the Jews and the Romans who were their rulers. When Jesus was 30 years of age John recognised him as the Messiah or Saviour whom the Jewish people had been long looking for, according to prophecy. Many mistakenly thought he would deliver them from Roman rule and set up a free state of Israel. But Jesus had nothing to do with politics. John pointed to him as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. He turned the attention of people to Jesus and many began to follow him.

Before the public ministry of Jesus began, he passed through a period of temptation of Satan, when he was tempted to follow

a path of self gratification, self-assertion and self-glory. But he overcame the temptation and chose the path of self-denial, service and offering the supreme sacrifice of his life for human sin. He began to preach, 'The Kingdom of God is at hand, repent for your sins and believe in me, for I will take the full punishment of your sin and set you free.' He then went about preaching this gospel or good news and many followed him. He chose twelve disciples from various walks of life. He placed the weight on righteous living rather than on religious rituals. This hurt the feelings of some of the orthodox religious leaders of that time. He said, 'God was the Father of all mankind, and not of the Jews alone.' He exhorted people to turn from their evil ways, saying he had brought them hope from God to live aright. He stressed the importance of love and holiness more than religious ceremonies. At one time he condemned the shopkeepers in the temple and drove them away. He deplored the fact that the temple had been converted into a place of business. He advocated simple prayer to God rather than grand festivals. He served all kinds of people and served all those who came to him. He healed the sick, the lame, the blind, the lepers and people with various other diseases. Crowds thronged around him. The Jewish religious leaders envied him. Their religion seemed to suffer in contrast to his. They sought the help of the Roman government to do away with Jesus. They went and reported to the Roman authorities that Jesus was a rebel and was trying to overthrow the Roman government. A plot was designed against him. A false disciple by name Judas Iscariot was bribed to betray Jesus. He was arrested under cover of darkness one night as he was praying in the garden of Gethsemane outside Jerusalem. He was brought before the Jewish council. They declared Jesus a heretic. He had uttered blasphemy since he claimed he was the son of God. They judged him guilty of death, but they had no power to put him to death. So they produced him before the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate accusing him of treason against Caesar. On enquiry Pilate found that Jesus was innocent, but the crowd hired by the religious leaders, clamoured for his death. Pilate, willing to please the crowd, handed over Jesus for crucifixion. The soldiers smote him and mocked him, putting on him a

crown of thorns, and made him carry his cross to the hill of Golgotha. There they crucified him between two thieves. He died and was buried. On the third day he rose from the grave and appeared to his disciples who were mourning and weeping. He asked them to go to all the world and preach his message of hope. Emboldened by the Resurrection of Jesus, his disciples dedicated their lives for the spread of the gospel of their master.

Teachings of Jesus

The teachings of Jesus are a practical and a fuller explanation of the law of Moses given to Israel in 1491 B.C. The law of Moses says that there is only one God—the Father of all. He is to be worshipped by seeking to know Him and not making an image of our own fancy.

1. Jesus said, he was the son of God who came to show people by his life what was the nature and manner of this one true God.

2. He came to offer himself a sacrifice for human sin. On the merits of this sacrifice any one who felt sorry for his sins could expect a pardon from God and receive power to live a life which overcomes sin.

3. Jesus lived a sinless life. It was then he offered his life as a sacrifice. Therefore Jesus said, his sacrifice would bring people back into contact with a Holy God, if they wanted it.

4. He said there is no other sacrifice needed for human sin than his sacrifice.

5. He taught the equality of all men and love to one's neighbour; 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.'

6. Jesus died, forgiving his enemies. He taught his followers to do so too. If they were willing, he would empower them to do so.

7. Jesus said, Evil should not be repaid with evil. Evil can only be overcome with good,

8. He did not promise his followers a security against troubles and persecution but he promised them peace even under difficult circumstances.

9. He drew their attention away from ceremonies and rituals and taught them faith in God that works by love.

10. He taught that man's life does not consist in the number of things he possesses, but in loving God and those around him.

11. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the basis for all his teaching.

12. Jesus said that there is an end to this world. He foretold that the morals of men will deteriorate with time and reach a dreadful limit. He said he would come again and set up a perfect government on this earth, when those who truly followed him would be given a part in it.

13. He taught that every man who has lived on this earth would be resurrected to give an account of his life to God. Those who had received his salvation through his death would live forever with God. The others who had not repented and sought God's pardon would be demaned to hell.

Expansion of Christianity

After the ascension of Christ into heaven, his apostles (disciples) carried the doctrines of Christianity to many parts of the world. St. Thomas came to India and spread the Gospel here. Saul, a Jew who at first persecuted the Christians, became an Apostle after seeing a vision in which Jesus exhorted him to spread his gospel far and wide. He was called as St. Paul after his conversion. He was the person who primarily declared that Christianity was meant not only for the Jews but also for the non-Jews. He carried the words of Jesus to Rome, the capital of Roman Empire, and also to Syria, Asia Minor and other Mediterranean countries. Since he refused to worship the Emperor, according to the decree of the empire he was executed by *Nero* in 64 A.D. Peter one of the Apostles had also moved to Rome and established the church of Rome which became the

nucleus of the Catholic Church of later times. He threw open gates of Christianity to the non-Jews also. He was also executed for not worshipping the Roman Emperor. A large number of Christianity became prey to the persecution of the Roman Emperors. Even such a pious and good king as Marcus Aurelius thought it necessary to persecute the Christians. But the more the Christian blood was spilt the stronger the church became. 'The blood of the martyrs became the seed of Christianity'. At last, Emperor *Constantine* accepted the principles of Christianity and issued the Edict of Milan in 313 A.D. granting freedom to Christianity. Soon it became the state religion. Later on when the Barbarian kings conquered the Roman Empire, Christianity was adopted by them and their subjects. By the 15th century A.D. Christianity spread over the whole of Europe. Rome became the capital of the Catholic Church which was a sort of spiritual empire to which the Pope was the head. Owing to the Reformation movement which arose in Germany in the 16th century, to protest against certain lapses in the church, Christians were divided into two sections—the Protestant and the Roman Catholic. Among the Protestants there arose several surges of religious movements which gave rise to a number of sects such as Puritans, Anglicans, Methodists etc. They are against certain beliefs of the Roman catholics such as transubstantiation, auricular confession, celibacy of the clergy etc. but they belive in the Bible and the basic teachings of Jesus. During the modern era when the Europeans went and colonised the new world and the Eastern countries, their missionaries accompanied them and spread Christianity among the natives.

The Portuguese were the Pioneers in the propagation of Christianity in India. But they failed in their attempts owing to the policy of persecution which they followed. The East India Company did not encourage proselytisation, since trade was their main concern. However the western Roman catholic missionaries such as the Madurai Mission converted a large number of Hindus into the Christian religion. The Serampur mission at Calcutta also did a lot of service to the Hindus and converted a large number of them into Christianity. The Catholic and the Protestant missionaries vied with one another in spreading the principles of Christianity among the Hindus.

Christian Contribution to Indian Culture

The Christian missionaries, though they came into India for the purpose of declaring the gospel of Christ, very soon identified themselves with Indian culture and became Indianised. They did yeomen service to the betterment of India masses. Their greatest service is in the field of education. The Jesuits started educational institutions wherever possible and imparted education to Indian children in secular sciences along with Christian morals. Colleges like St, Joseph's College, Trichy, and Loyola College at Madras are standing examples of the services of Roman Catholic priests to the cause of education. The Madras Christian College at Tambaram, Bishop Heber's College at Trichy are visible symbols of the services of Protestant missions to education. The London mission and other Missions have established a number of High schools all over India. Industrial and technical schools have also been established by them. They introduced the printing press into India and helped the spread of literacy. Some of them like Father Beschy known as Viramamuni studied the local languages and wrote literary works in them, such as Thembavani in Tamil. It was Rev. Caldwell who wrote at first, the grammar of Dravidian languages. Scholars like Father Heras have contributed their mite to historical literature. His researches on Pallavas and Indus valley civilization are praiseworthy. Since Christianity is a religion, teaching love to the neighbours, the missionaries started a number of orphanages, as the one near Tuticorin, hospitals as the one at Vellore, and leprosy houses. They set an example to the Indians in selfless service. Their services to the weaker sections of the society are immeasurable. The uncivilised Naga tribes were converted into civilized and educated citizens only by the unstinted and selfless service of the missionaries. The so-called untouchable castes of India such as the Paraiyas, and Paravas were converted, educated and were raised to a status of equality with the others in the Christian fold. But it is a pity that caste hierarchy has not altogether died out among the Christians. However many down-trodden people of India have been infused with a sense of confidence and pride only because of the civilizing effects of Christianity. It is perhaps owing to their successful conversion drive among the untouchables,

modern Indian leaders like Swamy Vivekananda, Narayana Guru, Phooley, Ramaswamy Naicker, Ghandiji etc. began to condemn untouchability and work for the uplift of the untouchables. Sri Ramakrishna Mission has started schools and colleges all over India after the model of Roman Catholic missions. Ideals such as charity, love for the poor and service to the sick and the afflicted, though found already in Indian scriptures, have gathered further momentum after the spread of Christianity in India.

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

Islam is one of the great religions of the world. There are about one hundred crores of Muslims living throughout the world. According to 1971 census, there are 6 crores of Muslims in India which is the third among the countries having the highest Muslim population.

According to Muslims, Islam is the religion revealed to humanity by God and it is the same religion that was followed and preached by all the prophets from Adam onwards including Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus. Its codes were evolved in accordance with the changing times and necessities but slowly its principles became distorted, and people lost their faith and went astray. Therefore, Muhammad, the last of the prophets appeared and perfected the religion. Islam was once again established in this world as a perfect and complete religion for all times.

Prophet Muhammad (SAL.)

Muhammad was born on Monday, April the 20, 571 A. D. at Mecca in Arabia in the family of Quraish belonging to the clan of Hashim. He lost his father Abdulla before his birth and he was brought up by his mother Amina who died before he completed his sixth year. Then he grew under the care of his grand father Abdul Muthalif who also died before Muhammad was nine years old. Then his uncle Abuthalib became his guardian.

Muhammad had no opportunity for formal education but even when he was a boy his character was perfect and his

manners were pleasing. In his younger days, he tended his uncle's sheep and later assisted him in his business. When he was twelve, he accompanied his uncle in a merchant's caravan to Syria. With his young, vigorous and searching mind, the meeting of people of different places and faiths, of strange customs and civilizations produced in him a lasting impression and made him contemplate about the Creations and the Creator.

Muhammad always spoke the truth and was trusted by all. His sweet manners and good conduct made the Meccans call him endearingly as *Al Ameen* (The Trustworthy) and *Assadhik* (The Truthful). He was always ready to help others and he loved peace. He was very much distressed at the quarrels between the different clans. He therefore helped to organise a leaque with the leading members of different clans. The leaque, known as 'Hilf Al Fudhool', pledged to defend the weak and help the oppressed and establish peace among the confronting groups.

Impressed by Muhammad's character, Khatheeja, a rich Meccan lady, employed him in her business. At the age of twenty-five, Muhammad was in charge of a caravan carrying her merchandise to Syria. After his return, Khatheeja was very much pleased with his successful management of her business and was so attracted by his nobility of character that she desired to marry him. Even though she was a widow of forty and Muhammad was only twenty-five, they married and lived happily.

Though it was customary with the Arabs to have a number of wives, Muhammad remained devoted to Khatheeja for 25 years without a second marriage. By her, Muhammad had six children. The children except Fathima who survived her father, died in their infancy.

After his marriage with Khatheeja, he devoted more of his attention towards social work. When repairs were done to the ancient place of worship called *Kaaba* a big feud was about to erupt on who should have the privilege of carrying the holy stone 'Hijarul-Aswadh' and replace it. Muhammad

placed the black stone in the middle of a big cloth and asked the leaders of different clans to lift the cloth jointly and have equal share in taking the stone to its proper place. Thus he settled the problem amicably and to the satisfaction of all and became famous as a peace-maker.

Yet Muhammad was not happy with his people because they were steeped in ignorance and superstition. He was always contemplating 'Who are we? What is the purpose of all the creations? What is the mission of man on this earth?' He used to retire alone to a cave in Mount Hira and contemplate, fasting and praying to God for enlightenment.

He had completed forty years and one night in the month of Ramzan, the Angel Gabriel descended before him in the cave and revealed God's words and thus he was chosen as a Messenger of God. When he explained to his wife about his strange experience in Mount Hira, Khatheeja immediately accepted him as a Messenger of God and became the first follower of Muhammad. Then came Abubacker, Ali, Zaid and others into the fold of Islam. Yet Muhammad did not preach Islam openly.

Only in the fourth year after the first revelation, he received the divine direction to preach Islam publicly. Muhammad and his followers started to preach amidst the Meccans. He asked the people to accept the unity of God, denounced idolatory and the evil ways of his people.

But the Meccans were not ready to abandon their age old superstitious beliefs. The Meccans rose against Muhammad and his followers and caused them untold sufferings. Many were killed. Instead, they were ready to offer Muhammad huge wealth and high position and whatever he would ask them for. But he flatly refused their offers saying that he would not abandon his principles even if they offered the sun in one hand and the moon in the other! The Quraish became furious and started attacking Muhammad and his followers. In these circumstances, Muhammad sent a few Muslims to take refuge in Abyssinia. But slowly the number of his followers was increasing. They had

a big support when a strong man of the opponents, Omar, joined the faithful. Muhammad's uncle Hamza also became a Muslim. So the Quraish ostracized Muhammad and his family from society. All the while, his uncle Abuthalib was protecting him. But soon Abuthalib died and later the prophet's wife Khatheeja also died. The persecution by the enemies increased further. Once Muhammad went to the nearby Thaif and called the people towards one God. But they jeered him and threw stones on him. Even when he was profusely bleeding, he did not curse them but prayed for them. All along, the divine revelations (verses of Quran) were coming. Now Muhammad being a widower, his companion Abubacker gave him his youngest daughter Aisha in marriage. The Prophet also married Souda, a widow of a companion who died for the sake of Islam. One night during this period, Muhammad was accompanied by Angel Gabriel to Masjidul Aqsa and from there he ascended to heaven and had, the vision of God. This miraculous incident is called 'Miraj' or the 'Ascension'.

Muhammad was also preaching Islam to the Haj Pilgrims who visited Mecca every year. As a result, in the tenth year after the first revelation, six people came from Yadhrib. a City north of Mecca, and accepted Islam. Next year another six from Yadhrib embraced Islam. The number later swelled to seventy-three and they all vowed allegiance to the Prophet at a place called Akaba. They also invited Muhammad and his followers to come to their city and settle there.

Muhammad asked his Meccan followers to emigrate to Yadhrib gradually so that he could leave Mecca at the end. The Quraish did not like Muhammad leaving Mecca with his divine mission and plotted to kill him before his departure. But Muhammed and his closest companion Abubacker escaped without being noticed by the enemies and hid themselves in the cave 'Thour' for three days. On the fourth day, they started towards Yadhrib. This is the famous *Hijira* from whence (622 A.D.) the Muslim Calendar commences.

Unlike Meccans, people of Yadhrib welcomed Muhammad with love and affection. Muhammad settled there and the city of Yadhrib came to be called *Madhina-Thun-Nabi* (The city of

the Prophet) or *Madhina* for short. At Madhina Muhammad unified the different clans and called them as *Ansars* (Patrons). They accepted the Meccan *Muhajireens* (Refugees) as their adopted brothers. Muhammad preached without resistance and his followers increased in number.

But the Quraishis were unhappy over this development and planned to destroy the spreading Islam. They sent a delegation to Abyssinia and demanded its king to extradite the few Muslims who had already taken asylum there as they could not tolerate the persecution and torture at the hands of the Quraish. The king refused to drive the Muslims out of his country.

At last thousands of Quraishis under Abunjahal came to attack Madhina. They were stopped at Badr and the Muslims won the battle even though they were only 313 in number. Next year the Quraish returned with three thousand soldiers. Seven hundred Muslims fought with them fiercely at Uhad and defeated the enemies although the Muslims also lost several soldiers. Then came another war in the fifth year of Hijira. The Quraish invaded with ten thousand soldiers. Muhammad went with three thousand companions and stopped the enemies by digging trenches outside Madhina.

Six years after leaving Mecca, Muhammad called 1400 Muslims and started on a pilgrimage to Mecca. But the Quraish stopped them at Hudaibia and made an agreement with Muhammad. Accordingly Muslims returned to Madhina. Even after this event, the Quraish continued to confront the Muslims until in the eighth year of Hijira, in the month of Ramzan, Muhammad proceeded to Mecca with ten thousand companions and gained a bloodless victory over the city. The enemies who had been giving endless trouble to the Muslims for more than two decades, were afraid of vengeance at the hands of the Muslims. But Muhammad pardoned them and treated them well. And Islam began to spread throughout Arabia.

Muhammad returned to Madhina and led a simple life. In the tenth year of Hijira, he went on a pilgrimage to Mecca with 1,24,000 companions. It was his last Haj. The sermon he gave

on that occasion is a testament of universal brotherhood of Islam. His mission was over and he died in 632 A.D.

Teachings of Islam

Islam means complete submission to God and hence bringing peace to the world. The followers of Islam are called *Muslims* meaning those who surrender to God.

The precepts of Islam are found in Quran which is the collection of revelations of God brought to Muhammad, through the Angel Gabriel. From the first revelation after his fortieth year, Quran was revealed in pieces for twenty-three years afterwards. As soon as a revelation came, it was recited by Muhammad and his companions memorised it and a select group was committed to writing the verses. The complete Quran was arranged by Muhammad's order and later the Caliph Othman brought it in a single volume containing 114 chapters. Each chapter consists of several verses or *Ayath*. There are 6,666 verses in the Quran. The teachings of Quran may be divided into three categories. (1) Faith (Iman), (2) Worship (Ibadath), (3) Righteous deeds (Ihsan).

Next to Quran, the most important book of the Muslims is *Hadith*. It is the collection of words and deeds of Muhammad. Muslims consider The Quran and Hadith as two eyes of Islam. All the codes and laws of the religion of Islam are derived from these two sources. Four great interpreters of Islamic codes are the Imams: Abuhaneefa, Shafi, Malik and Hanbal. A Muslim can follow any one of them.

The teachings of Islam are simple and easy to follow. Every Muslim has to believe in the following principles:

1. There is no God except Allah and Muhammad is His Prophet. This is the basic *Kalima* which every Muslim should accept and his faith and action should conform to this belief.

2. God has created Angels to serve Him.

3. God has sent Prophets to every nation to guide the people in the right path.
4. He has also revealed the scriptures to many prophets.
5. One's life continues after death and there is a final day of judgement when God will reward or punish every soul according to its deeds.
6. God has complete control over everything, good or bad. Apart from the faith in the foregoing principles, a Muslim must perform the following five duties :
   - (i) Affirmation of belief in the unity of God and recognition of the Mission of Muhammad as a Messenger of God.
   - (ii) Prayers five times a day.
   - (iii) Annual payment of *Zakath* or *poor rate* (2½% of the value of a person's movable possessions for the year).
   - (iv) Fasting during day time in the month of Ramzan every year.
   - (v) Pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a life time, obligatory on those who can afford to perform it.

In addition to these basic tenets, Islam has also ordained one's duties to God as well as to fellow creatures for his happy life in this world and hereafter. According to Muhammad's sayings, one cannot love God without loving his fellow creatures. We cannot be grateful to God without being grateful to man. A man without compassion is far removed from God.

Search for knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim male and female. Muhammad was very particular in practising and preaching justice, truth, keeping promises, being trustworthy, purity in thought and action etc. Humility and piety are the most important virtues of a Muslim.

Every action of ours must be to please God. In short, our worship, sacrifice, life and death are all only for the sake of God.

Islam advocates equality among men and women. Usury, drinking, gambling and adultery are forbidden. There is guidance in Quran and Hadith fore every aspect of man's daily life.

Growth of Islam

Muhammad was both the religious and temporal head of the Islamic state. Before his death Islam had spread throughout Arabia and Muhammad administered the country from Madhina.

After Muhammad's death, his closest companion Abubacker was unanimously chosen as the head of the state. He started as a representative of Muhammad and therefore was called a 'Khalifa' (Representative). He was the religious head also. Hence, all the later heads of the state were called Caliphs.

Abubacker was the first Caliph in the history of Islam. After his death, Omer, Othman and Ali were successively chosen as Caliphs. These first four Caliphs were the best and foremost and they ruled according to the principles of Islam. They were called Khulafa-e-Rashideen (the straight-forward Caliphs). During their period, Islam and its kingdom spread to Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Persia.

After the death of the Caliph Ali, truly Islamic caliphate came to an end. The next Caliph Muwaiya and his successors, the Omyads, did not follow Islamic principles strictly. They slowly became despots. Among the Omyad Caliphs, only Omer Ibn Abdul Azeez was a true follower of the first four caliphs.

Damascus was the capital of the Omyads and they ruled for 92 years. Then, they were overthrown by the Abbasid Caliphs who ruled from Baghdad. During the reign of 37 Abbasid Caliphs, Islamic rule spread to Turkey, North Africa and Spain. Harun Al Rasheed and Al Mamoon were among the famous Abbasid Caliphs.

Islam spread to India in the 8th century. Muhammad bin Casim invaded Sind (711—712 A.D.) during the rule of Omyad Caliph Valeedh-I. In the beginning of 11th century, Muhammed Gazni and then Mahammed Gori invaded North India and Muslim rule was established in India. In 1206 A.D. Kuthbudeen Ibek founded the Slave dynasty. The Khiljis ruled from 1290 to 1321 A.D. Following them Thughlaks, Sayyads and Lodis ruled over North India. The Mughals established their rule in 1526 A.D. and ruled for 331 years.

Islam was introduced in South India by the Arab merchants during the 7th century. Arab merchants came by Arabian Sea and settled in the West Coast. Local people of Malabar came into contact with the new religion of Arabs and many embraced Islam. The Arabs married women of local muslims and they were called Mappillas. Their descendants are even now called as Mappillas.

In the same way, Muslim saints spread Islam among Tamil people of Eastern Sea shore. Thus Islam had spread in South India even before Muslim Kings invaded South India. When Khilji Kings invaded Madurai, they found Muslim soldiers amongt he defending Southern forces.

Thus Islam spread in India even before the Mulim conquest through traders and preachings of Muslim saints.*

Contribution of Islam to Indian Culture

The Muslims who ruled India for over five hundred years have left an indelible impression on the cultural fabric of India. The empires created by the Sultans of Delhi and the Mughals have vanished but the monuments and relics left over by them still survive in the Indian soil proclaiming to the world the glory of the Muslim age in Indian History. There is no walk of life in India, political, social, economic and cultural which escaped the benign influence of the Islamic civilization.

Political field: In the political field, the contribution of the Muslims is copius. It was they who conquered the major parts of India and provided political unity to the country. Thus they paved the way for a feeling of oneness among the people. They also provided to the whole of Northern India and to a great

* The sub-topic 'Religion of Islam' was written and Reviewed by the following Editorial Board: Chairman and Author: Prof. Dr. H. Mohamed Mohideen, Principal, New College, Madras-600014. Review Committee Members: (1) Prof. M. V. Subramaniam, 'Gomathi Vilas' Tirunelveli-627 001. (2) Thiru. J. M. Miya Khan, 'Daya Manzil', Madras-600 044. (3) Prof. Venkatasamy, Teacher's College, Madras-600 015. (4) Prof. N. Subramaniam, 96, N. G O. Colony, Madurai-625 019. (5) Tmt. Jayalakshmi Headmistress, Kshatriya Girls' Hi. Sec. School, Virudhu Nagar-626 001.

part of Deccan a uniform administrative system, uniform coinage and a uniform official language (Persian). Some of the features of the Mughal administration such as the division of the country into provinces (Subhas), districts (Zillahs) and Taluks still continue. Administrative terms of the Muslim age such as Tahsil, Court, Bursar, Kazana, Jamabandi etc. still are in use in our administrative system. The land revenue system, judicial procedure and the civil service of the present day retain many of the Muslim features. Many Hindu kings such as the Rajputs and the Marathas simply copied the Mughal administrative system, court life, ceremonials, dress, royal titles and even official procedure.

Military field: The Muslims contributed much to the art of warfare in India. It is from them the Indians learnt the proper use of cavalry and artillery. They understood the superiority of cavalry and the inferiority of elephantry which they slowly gave up. They also learnt from them the art of building strong forts and victualising them.

Social and Religious field: The Muslim egalitarian ideas inspired the Bhakti movements of Kabir, Nanak, Ramanand, Chaitanya etc. which preached a casteless society and oneness of God. The Kabir panthis and Sikhs follow religions which are a synthesis of Hindu and Muslim religious principles. Akbar's social reforms such as the abolition of Sati, early marriage, prostitution and drinking, served as an example to modern social reformers. Akbar's theory of social synthesis is copied by modern advocates of emotional integration between Hindus and Muslims.

Economic field: The Muslims were lovers of luxury and established Kharkanas or industrial establishments to produce luxurious articles. In those 'kharkanas' gorgeous dresses embroidered with beautiful flowers, brocades, shawls, muslins, carpets, arms and ammunitions and musical instruments were made.

Cultural field: It was in the field of culture the Muslim influence has been felt most intensively. Present day Indian music and musical instruments reveal a lot of Muslim influence. The

impress of Mughal music is found in qawwali, thumari and ghazal. The whole gamut of Hindusthani music is a Mughal contribution. Tabala, Guitar and Sarangi are the musical instruments which are the legacy of the Mughal period. A new school of painting rose in the Mughal period. Emperor Jehangir patronised miniature painting. Under him Indianization of painting reached its highest watermark. In architecture the Muslim period witnessed the growth of Indo-saracen art in which the Muslim and Indian arts were synthesized. The majestic buildings of Fatehpur Sikri built by Akbar, the Red Fort built by Shah Jahan, The Taj Mahal which is described as a dream in marble, the Moti Masjid, the Jumma Masjid etc. of North India, the Golkonda Fort, the Fort of Srirangapatanam, the Golgumbaz Dome at Bijapur, the Charminar and other fine buildings of Hyderabad etc. in South India, are standing examples of the excellence of Muslim art and architecture. The art of laying gardens with artificial fountains was bequeathed to the Indians by the Mughals.

In the field of language and literature the Muslims have contributed much. It was they who introduced into India the use of paper, calligraphy and book illumination. The sense of security and leisure provided by the Muslims, led to the growth of vernacular literature. The Bhakti movement gave a fillip to it. Two new synthetic languages called Hindustani and Urdu arose and a lot of literature was created in them. A large amount of historical literature arose in the period. Abul Fazl, Ferishta, Badauni, Khafi Khan etc. produced good historical works. Unani system of medicine was a Mughal contribution. Astronomy and other sciences were also encouraged. Thus the Muslim age contributed its mite to the present day Indian culture.

SIKHISM

Guru Nanak (1469–1538)

Guru Nanak was the founder of Sikhism. He was born in 1469 A.D. at a village called Talwandi, in West Punjab. His father was Mehta Kalu and his mother was Tripta. He joined the village school at the age of seven but was not at all interested

in his studies. Therefore his father stopped him from the school and asked him to look after his land and cattle. Nanak grossly neglected his duties and spent most of his time in contemplation. Then his father put him into a trade. But Nanak was too honest to be a successful trader. He took pleasure in spending money for the poor and the needy rather than in earning it. His father then married him with a beautiful damsel called Sulakhni, with a view to wean him away from his spiritual leanings. Nanak had two sons but still he was indifferent to worldly affairs. So his father sent him to Sultanpur where his brother-in-law was working. There he got the post of a store-keeper and executed his duties with great sincerity. But he continued his contemplation on spiritual matters and got enlightenment in 1499 while he was contemplating on the banks of River Beas near Sultanpur. After that he gave up his job and became an ascetic.



Fig. 11. Guru Nanak

Nanak spent most of his time in travelling and propagating the doctrines. His first tour lasted for 12 years during which period he visited Eminabad, Kurukshetra, Haridwar, Banares and Kamrup. He visited the Deccan and Ceylon during his second tour. His third tour was to Kashmir and Kailash mountain. He is said to have gone outside India and visited Baghdad, Mecca and Medina. His last tour was confined only to Punjab. During the reign of Babar he and his disciple Mardana were arrested and thrown into prison. But later on they were released when Babar came to know that he was a saint. Nanak breathed his last in 1538 at Kartarpur.

Teachings of Nanak

The teachings of Nanak formed the basis of Sikhism. They were compiled later into a book form, called *Adhigranth* which may be regarded as the Bible of the Sikhs. Guru Nanak, often laid emphasis on three principles i.e., worship of one God instead of many, repetition of His holy name with devotion and getting the assistance and guidance from a Guru, in doing so. According to him God is one and He is omnipresent, immanent and transcendant. He lives in the heart of every person. He helps those who surrender to Him completely. One must worship Him by repeating His Holy Name (Sat Nam) constantly. The Holy Name only can remove all the obstacles from his path of salvation. Those who did not repeat His name could not be saved at all. For all this a spiritual teacher or Guru is essential. It is through the grace of the Guru, one learns the presence of God everywhere and enjoys divine pleasure. A proper guru is found through Divine grace.

Nanak condemned idol worship and the performance of meaningless ceremonies. By going on pilgrimage and dipping in holy waters one cannot attain salvation. Only by repeating God's name one's heart can be purified. The five evil passions to be guarded against are passion (Kam) anger (Krodh) greed (Lobh) attachment (Moh) and pride (Ahankar). He was against all caste distinctions among his disciples. The word Sikh means disciple. The Sikhs must sit together, irrespective of caste and dine together. This habit is known as langar or common kitchen. According to Nanak there is no difference between a Hindu and a Muslim, Ram and Rahim. He considered God as above Rama, Krishna, Vishnu and other Hindu Gods. He ridiculed those who worshipped God's incarnations rather than God Himself. He also condemned those who merely relied on Vedas and scriptures. Because of all these doctrines, Nanak is considered as a revolutionary who created a new religion. But it should be borne in mind that he did not deny the existence of the Hindu Gods but only challenged their supremacy. Though he attacked the Vedas he never denied the wisdom contained in it. He was only a reformer who wanted to clean Hinduism of its superstitions. But in course of time his followers made Sikhism a separate religion.

Growth of Sikhism

Nanak had two sons, but he did not nominate any of them as his successor. On the otherhand he selected *Angad* (1538–52) as his successor. Guru Angad compiled the biography of Nanak

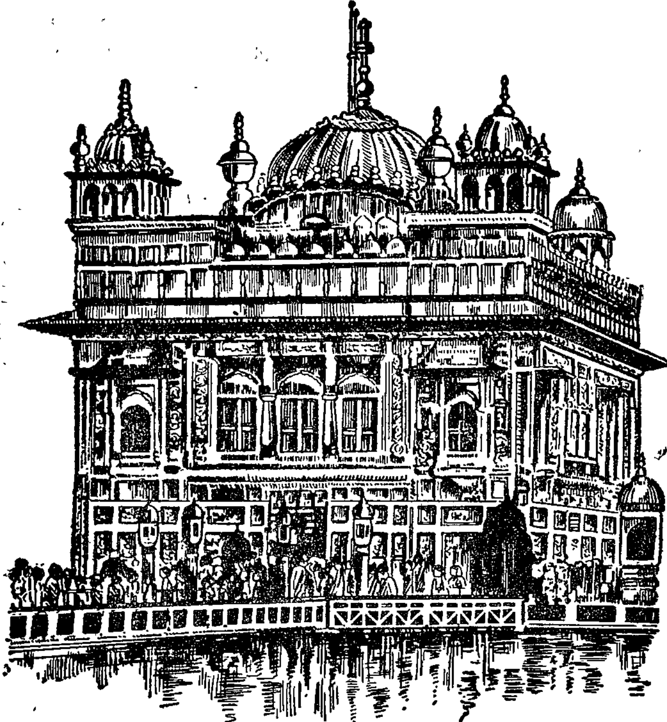


Fig. 12. Golden Temple

and also his teachings. He introduced strict discipline among the Sikhs and consolidated the Sikh community. He invented a new alphabet called gurmukhi and popularized it. Humayun came to him and received his blessings.

After the death of Angad, *Amardas* (1552–74) succeeded him, as per the wishes of the former. The sons of Nanak and Angad disputed his claim to the headship of the Sikh community, but soon they were silenced. Guru Amardas introduced several reforms among the Sikhs and made them into

a distinct unit. He prohibited birth and death ceremonies performed by the Sikhs, after the model of Hindus and introduced new ceremonies. He also prevented them from drinking wine, performing sati and adopting purdhas. He divided his spiritual empire into 22 parts called Manjis and appointed separate Sikh leaders over them. He constructed a Baoli at Lahore which became a place of pilgrimage. By his efforts the differences between the Sikhs and the Hindus increased in number and they formed into a separate class by themselves.

Amardas was succeeded by his son-in-law *Ramdas* (1575–81). He earned the goodwill and admiration from Emperor Akbar who donated a piece of land with a pool near Amritsar, to him. Guru Ramdas built a temple in the plot and enlarged the tank. He also constructed a new town called Ramdaspur, which came to be known as Amritsar later on. He started the excavation of two tanks called Amritsar and Santokshar.

PART B

VII. FINE ARTS AND LITERATURE

A study of the art and literature of India is a study of national life and thought. From the buildings, sculpture and literature of the various periods of Indian History, we are able to know the creative and constructive genius of the people of this great country. In this chapter we shall describe the architecture, painting, music, dance and literature of our country from very early times, emphasizing the impact of foreign influences on them.

ARCHITECTURE

Rediscovery of Indian Architecture

Students of Indian History should pay a deep dept of gratitude to the Viceroy, Lord Curzon for passing the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act in 1904. Before he became the Viceroy, Lord Curzon had visited cultural centres like Angkorvat in Cambodia, Hampi and Ajanta in India. His cultural interest prompted him to pass the Historical Monuments Act according to which the Archaeological Department was required to preserve the historical monuments in our country. This was Curzon's contribution to History. The scholars of the Archaeological Department by conducting excavations were able to throw a flood of light on some of the unknown periods of History. The archaeological discoveries at Mohanjodaro and Harappa were made by scholars under the leadership of Sir John Marshall. Alexander Cunningham, James Fergusson and Dr. Burgess have by their investigations at different places given a vivid picture of Indian Architecture and sculpture. Educated Indians feel a glow of pride in the rich cultural heritage of our country, a heritage which may be compared favourably with that of Ancient Greece and Rome.

Architecture and Sculpture in Ancient India

The building style of the Age has been referred to in the chapter on the 'Indus Valley Civilization'. Storeyed buildings,

a public bath, a Great Granary, Workmen's quarters were all constructed in the Indus Valley more or less on modern lines. But the buildings were built of burnt or sun backed bricks. Stone architecture appears to have made some advance in Rig Vedic Age, because mention is made of stone castles and columns in the Vedic literature. But it was only from the Mauryan period that we come across artistic structures of high quality in large number and these enable us to form a definite idea about the nature of Indian Art.

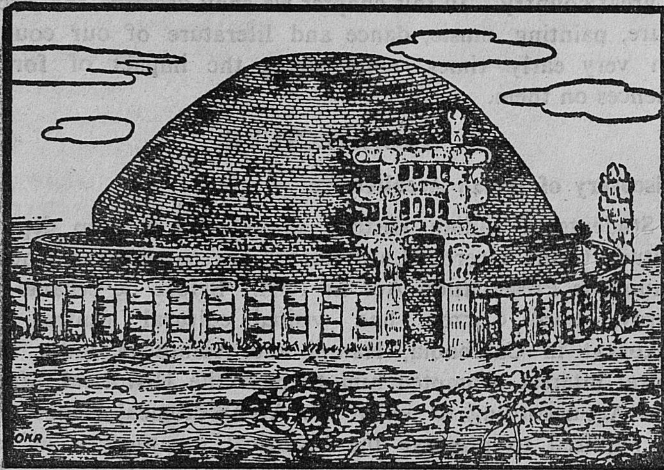


Fig. 13. Sanchi Stupa

The best specimens of Mauryan art are the Stupas, pillars and caves of the Ancient period. Stupas are dome like structures of brick or stone containing the relics of Buddha. Many of the stupas were destroyed during invasions and the only remaining stupa is the Sanchi stupa, near Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh.

The Pillars of Asoka are made of fine single blocks of sandstone so well polished as to appear like metallic columns and 12 to 16 metres in height. The most important Pillar is the Lion Pillar at Sarnath which has been adopted by the Government of India today as its emblem. The other Pillars are at Allahabad, Topra in Punjab removed to Delhi by Feroz Shah, Sanchi, Rummindei and Nigliva (Nepal), and Rampurva (Bihar). The

capital or tops of pillars are crowned with animals like the lion, the elephant, and the bull. The Sarnath Pillar with four lions, standing back to back, with the Dharmachakra, is an exquisite piece of workmanship according to Sir John Marshall.

Before the introduction of images, the Stupa, containing the relics of the Buddha, was the centre of the devotion and worship of the Buddhists. It was a temple for the Buddhists. Stupas having the character of sacred monuments are known as Chaityas. The Chaityas were hewn out of rock. The Chaityas Contained Halls bearing a resemblance to the Christian church. The largest of all the Chaitya Caves, is the great Chaitya Hall at Karle (near Bombay). A. K. Coomaraswamy in his 'History of Indian and Indonesian Art' says that Karle Hall 'is one of the most magnificent monuments in all India.

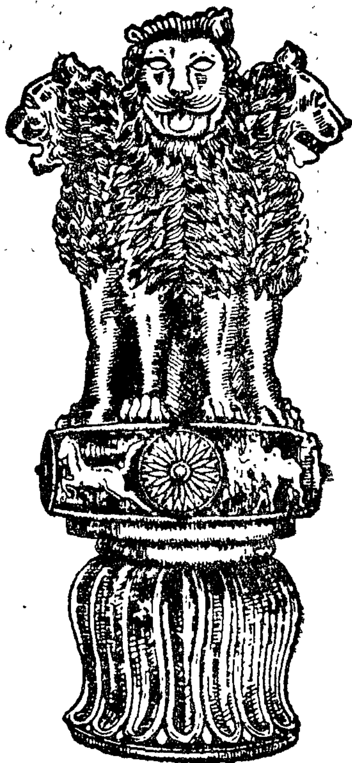


Fig. 14. Sarnath Pillar

Another important form of early Indian architecture is the *Sangharama* or *Vihara*, that is, monastry associated with Buddhism and Jainism, more particularly with the former. Rockcut examples of monasteries have been found in abundance and of these the Barabar and Nagarjuni groups of caves, built for the use of the Ajivikas, a heretical sect among the Jains, are the earliest. The Barabar group belongs to the time of Asoka and the Nagarjuni, to one of his successors, Dasaratha. The Jain caves at Udayagiri and Khandagiri near Bhuvanesvar in Orissa go back to the time of Kharavela of Kalinga.

The earlist of the *Vihara Caves* in Western India are those at *Bhaja*. The Ajanta and Nasik Caves in this area have a decorative form. Each of the Ajanta or Nasik Caves consists of a

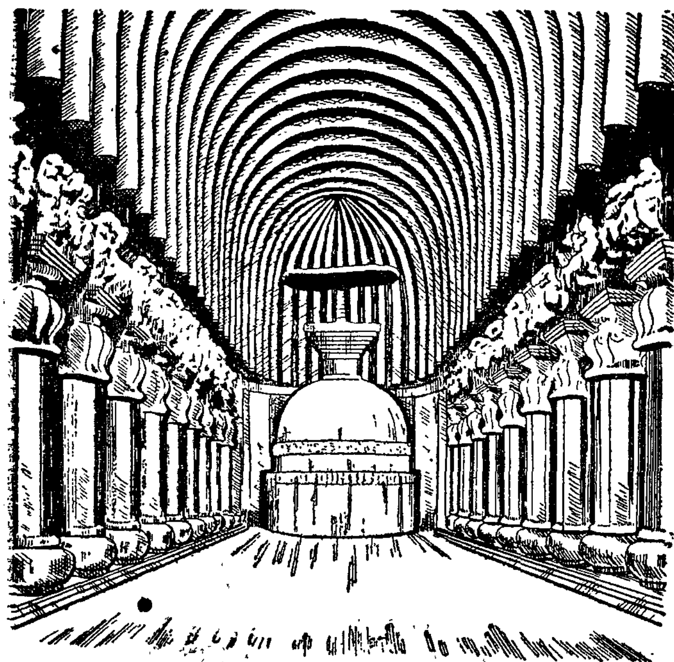


Fig. 15. Chaitya (Karle)

pillared verandah and a large central hall, without pillars, which open out into the cells ranged on three sides. On the back wall of these caves is carved the relief representation of figures.

During the five hundred years between the downfall of the Mauryan Empire and the rise of the Guptas, there was a distinct evolution of Indian art and architecture. Several schools of sculpture flourished in different places during this period and they were, Barhut and Sanchi in Madhya Pradesh, Bodh Gaya in Bihar, Mathura in Uttar Pradesh, Gandhara in North West India and Amaravati and Nagarjuni Konda near the mouth of the Krishna in Andhra Pradesh.

In the second century B.C. during the Sunga period a big stupa was constructed at Barhut but unfortunately nothing remains of it except a portion of the railings which surrounded it and one of the gateways which are now preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. On the railings were sculptured incidents from the Buddha's life and Jataka tales.

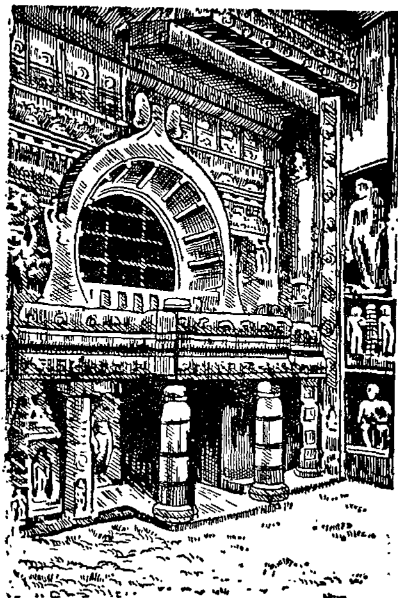


Fig. 16. Ajanta Caves

At Bodh Gaya there is a small railing round the great temple. The sculptures on the Gaya railing are similar to those of the Barhut railings.

The Sanchi Stupa is fortunately in a good condition to-day. The stupa was erected in Asoka's time but the gateways and railings were built by Pushyamitra Sunga, though he was a Hindu. Although the railing is quite plain, the four gateways are full of sculptures illustrating the various episodes in the life of the Buddha and the Jataka tales. The Sanchi sculptures show a higher standard of technical skill than the Barhut sculptures. From the Barhut and Sanchi sculptures, we get a knowledge of the religious beliefs of the people, their ideals, their customs and manners, in short, their way of life.



Fig. 17.
Gandhara Sculpture

The stone sculptures at Barhut, Gaya and Sanchi show that Indian artists had by the 2nd century B.C. mastered the difficult technique of making artistic figures on stone.

One result of the transformation of Buddhism into the Mahayana form was the development of *Gandhara Sculpture*. This type of sculpture was found in Gandhara (hence it is so called) the territory in North-Western India round about Peshawar and in Mathura in U.P. The best specimens of this sculpture may be assigned to 50 A.D. to 200 A.D., that is, the Kushan period. In the Barhut and Sanchi sculptures, the Buddha is always represented by a symbol, such as a wheel, a throne or a pair of footprints, and never by any human figure. But in the Gandhara art the image of the Buddha is conspicuous. The characteristic works are statues and reliefs. Various types of the Buddha image were produced; the Prince, the Ascetic and the Enlightened. The sculptured reliefs depict his Birth, his Renunciation and his Temptation. Thus the subjects are Indian, but they are made according to the Greek technique. The figures are well-proportioned; the fine drapery round the image and the light round the head of the Buddha are wonderfully depicted.

Gradually, the sculpture was developed on indigenous lines. In the 3rd century A.D. when the Ikshavakus were ruling over the present Krishna and Guntur districts, they built stupas, monasteries and pillars on the Gandhara model at *Nagarjuni Konda* and *Amaravati*. Art critics say that the Amaravati and Nagarjuni Konda sculptures were an improvement over the Gandhara and Mathura sculptures.

The classical phase of Indian sculpture began with the Gupta Period. The Gupta sculptures not only remained models of Indian art in all times to come but also they were imitated by the Indian colonies in South-East Asia.

In the Gupta period, the finest images of the Buddha and Hindu Gods were produced. These images found at Mathura and Sarnath are regarded as the best products of Indian art.

Magnificent temples of large dimensions were constructed during the Gupta Period but they have been destroyed. The stone temples at Sanchi and Deogarh and the brick temple at Bhitargaon are the only temples which have escaped destruction at the hands of invaders. Tall towers which surmounted the

roofs of temples in later ages, had not yet made their appearance. But the beginnings of this development are seen in the Bhitargaon temple.

Temples, North and South

The period from the end of the Gupta Age to the beginning of Muslim rule in India (600—1200 A.D.) was an age when magnificent temples were built all over India. This was an important period in the history of Indian architecture. Broadly there were two types of temples, Indo-Aryan or North Indian type and Dravidian or South Indian type. The differences between the two types are two. The first is in regard to the shape of the *Sikhara* or tower. The North Indian sikhara has the appearance of a solid mass of curvilinear tower, bulging in the middle and ending in almost a point. The South Indian Temple Tower looks like a pyramid made up of successive storeys; each smaller than the one below it and crowned by a small round piece of stone. Both types of towers are carved with beautiful sculptures. Another difference is that while pillars form an important part of the South Indian temple, they are absent in North Indian temples.

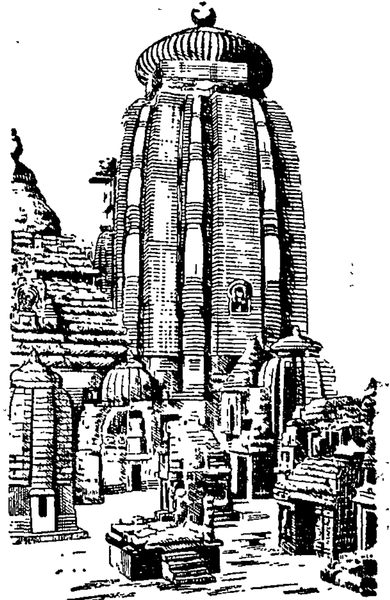


Fig. 18. Lingraj Temple

The most important North Indian temples are the Lingaraj Temple and the Rajarani Temple at Bhuvaneswar, Temple of Jagannath at Puri, Mahadeva Temple at Khajuraho in Central India, and the Dilavara Temple at Mount Abu in Rajasthan.

The South Indian temple architecture and sculpture may be said to have begun only from the Pallava period (7th century

A.D.). The Pallava rulers like Mahendravarman and Narasimhavarman were great builders. Temples wonderfully cut out of rocks like the Seven Pagodas of Mamallapuram structural shrines like the shore temple at Mamallapuram and Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi and remarkable relief sculptures (at Mamallapuram) are the precious heritage of the Pallava rule.



Fig. 19. Khajuraho Temple

The Pallava temples show an advanced stage of temple architecture. We have no information about temple architecture for the period before the Pallavas, but we may say that the men who built the Pallava temples must have been trained in schools

with art traditions of centuries. So South India must have reached a fairly advanced stage of development in architecture and sculpture by the time of the Pallavas, that is seventh century A.D.

The imperial Cholas who ruled South India after the Pallavas were great builders and the Brahadeeswarar Temple at Tanjore built by Rajaraja, the Great is a standing monument of the architectural and sculptural skill of Tamil Nadu. Imitating his father, Rajendra Chola the son and successor of Rajaraja, built a temple at his new capital Gangaikonda Cholapuram on the model of the Tanjore Temple. The sikhara or tower of the Tanjore Temple is 54 metres high and is crowned by a massive

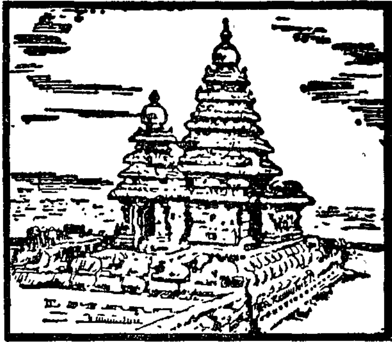


Fig. 20. Mamallapuram Shore Temple

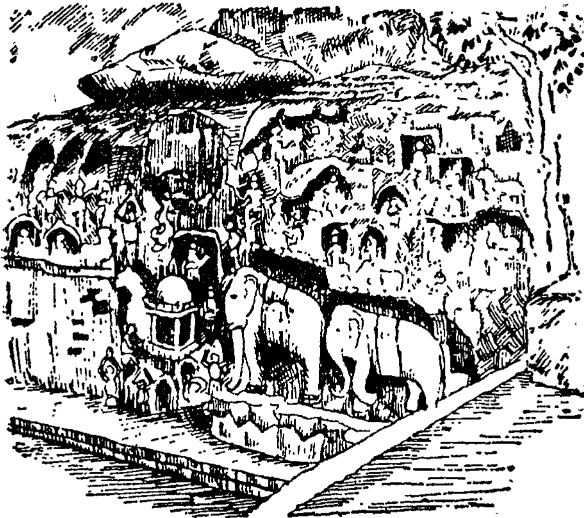


Fig. 21. Mamallapuram Sculpture

dome of a single block of stone weighing 80 tons. This heavy stone was slowly rolled on a plane, extending from the tower to

a village four miles off, known as Sarapallam. The Tanjore temple is the best specimen of Tamil architecture and it became the model for many temples in South India. Chola temples which are massive structures are decorated with beautiful sculptures. As Fergusson remarked, 'the Chola artists conceived like giants and finished like jewellers'.

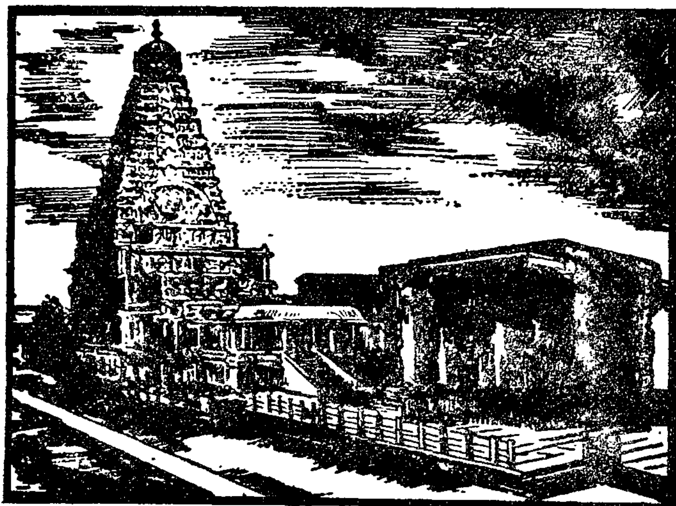


Fig. 22. Thanjavur Brahadeeswarar Temple

Gradually a new development took place in temple architecture. This was the addition of a huge gateway, or Gopuram, at the entrance to the temple. In course of time more Gopurams were built in the different directions of the temple and the sikhara or tower over the central shrine of the deity became small. The Vijayanagar Kings who built temples in the different parts of South India improved on the earlier structures. In all the temples built by the Vijayanagar Kings, one could see Gopurams (called Raya Gopurams after the Vijayanagar Kings) at the entrance to the temple, pillared mandapams, and long covered corridors round the central shrine. Krishna Deva Raya's Vittalaswami Temple, Hazara Ramaswami Temple and Krishnaswamy Temple are now in ruins owing to the destruction of the City of Vijayanagar after the battle of Talikota in 1565.

But the temples of Madurai, Srirangam and Tirunelveli are standing monuments of Vijayanagar temple architecture.

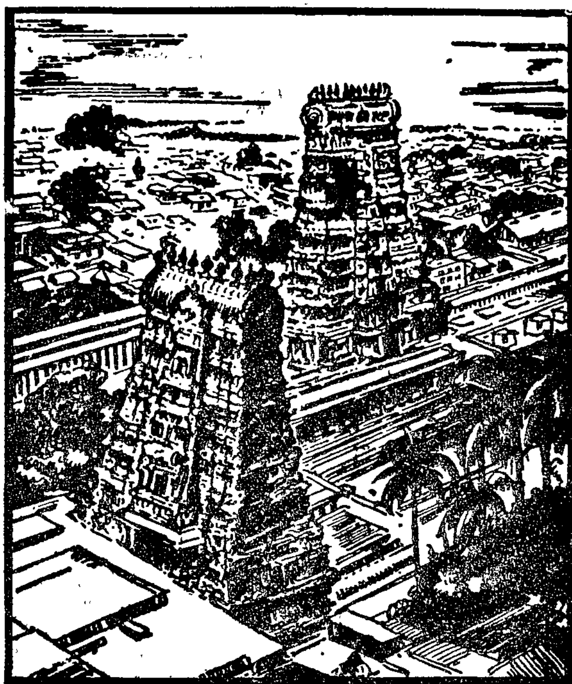


Fig. 23. Madurai Temple

Between North India and the Far South, which had evolved two independent styles of temple architecture, lay the Deccan plateau where both styles were mingled by the rulers of the area, namely, the Chalukyas and the Rashtrakutas. The temples built by the Chalukya Kings at Badami, the Chalukya Capital are both cave and structural temples dedicated to Hindu gods and they are of Pallava style. In these temples there are a number of beautiful images and sculptures. The Pallava style was adopted by the Rashtrakutas and the famous Kailasanatha temple at Ellora built by Krishna-I in the 8th century A.D. is a rock-cut marvel.

While the Chalukyas and the Rashtrakutas in the Deccan followed the Pallava style of architecture, the Hoysalas who

ruled over Mysore (modern Karnataka) in the 12th and 13th centuries evolved a new style of architecture. They inherited the art traditions of their predecessors, the Gangas, during

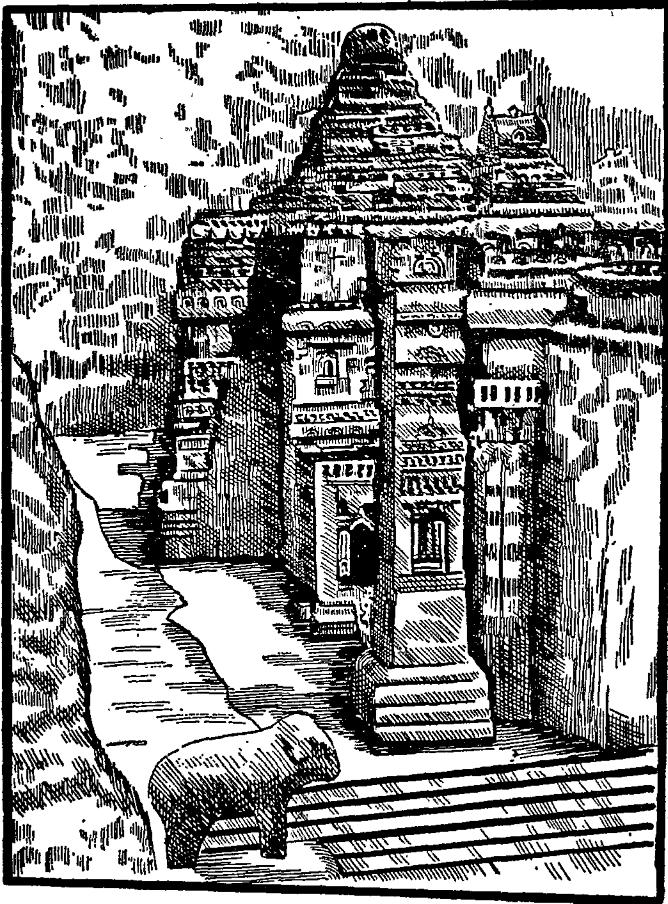


Fig. 24. Kailasanatha Temple

whose rule the famous collosal Jain image of Gomata was constructed by Chamunda Raya, a Ganga minister in about 983 A.D. The *Gomatesvara Statue* is on the top of a hillock at Sravanabelagola and is 18 metres high. It is one of the marvellous sculptures of the world.

The Hoysalas like the Gangas before them evinced an interest in architecture and sculpture. They built a number of temples, the most important being the *Hoysalesvare Temple at*

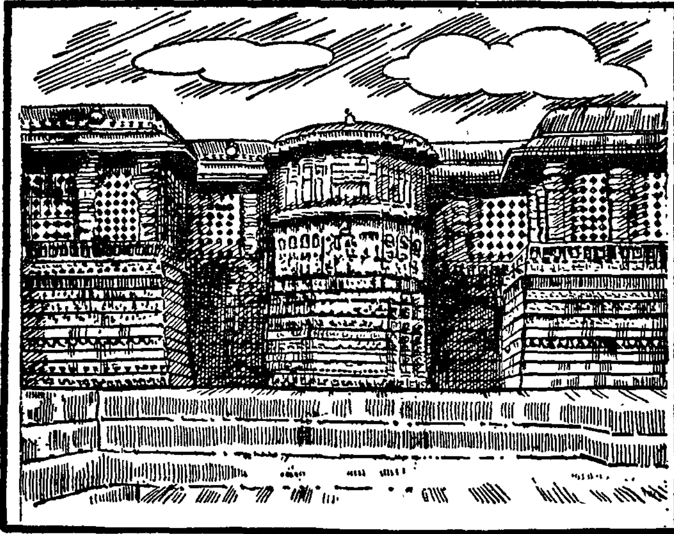


Fig. 25. Hoysalesvare Temple

Halebid or Dwarasamudra. The Hoysala temples are polygonal or star shaped. They are built on high bases or plinths which follow all the windings of the temple and thus give plenty of space for carving sculptures, the sikhara is pyramidal like the Chola temple but low. The temple is decorated with beautiful sculptures, mostly of animals and birds and stands as a marvellous exhibition of human labour.

In mediaeval times the temples and sculptures built in North India by Palas, Senas, Chandellas and Kalachuris were more influenced by the prevailing religious ideas than by aesthetic taste. Naturally they cannot compare favourably with any of the temples of the earlier period.

Islamic Impact on Indian Architecture

The Muslim conquest of India had its impact on Indian architecture. The buildings of the Sultanate period were built

according to Indo-Muslim art. The craftsmen were generally Hindus but they absorbed foreign ideas and built structures combining the principles of Hindu and Muslim architecture. At first temples were converted into mosques and indigenous art predominated but soon Muslim ideas got the upper hand. The chief features of Indo Muslim architecture are arches and domes, minars and minarets, geometric devices and beautiful sacred inscribings. Some of the important buildings of the Sultanate period were the *Kutub-Minar at Delhi* and the *mosques at Gaur in Bengal Atala and Jumma Mosque* at *Jaunpur*.

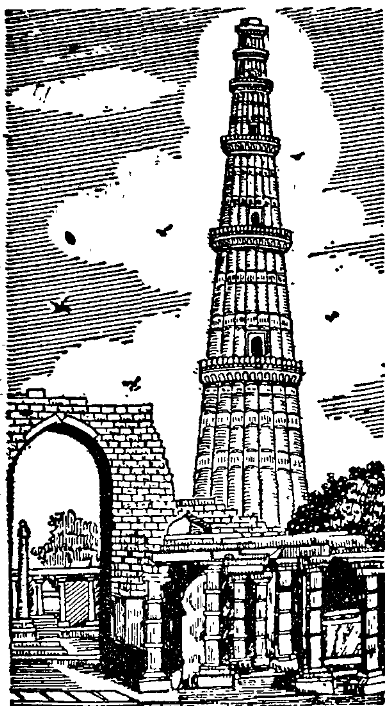


Fig. 26. Kutub Minar

In the Deccan the Bahmani Sultans were patrons of art, letters and sciences. The architecture of the time is a composite mixture of the Indian, Turkish, Egyptian and Persian styles. The *Jumma Masjid at Gulbarga* and the college of Muhammad Gawan at Bidar are examples of this. *Gol Gumbas* the mausoleum of Muhammad Adil Shah of Bijapur, who reigned in the 17th century, is again a splendid specimen of Bahmani architecture. Many of the Bahamani buildings were built on the sites and ruins of old temples. The materials of these Hindu temples were used for new buildings and so the influence of Hindu art was seen in these Muslim buildings.

The Bahmani kings offered employment to the Turkish, Persian and Egyptian craftsmen and they settled in large numbers in the Deccan. This was the reason for the foreign

elements in the Bahmani architecture. In course of time the native Deccani style marked by strength and grace became more and more pronounced.

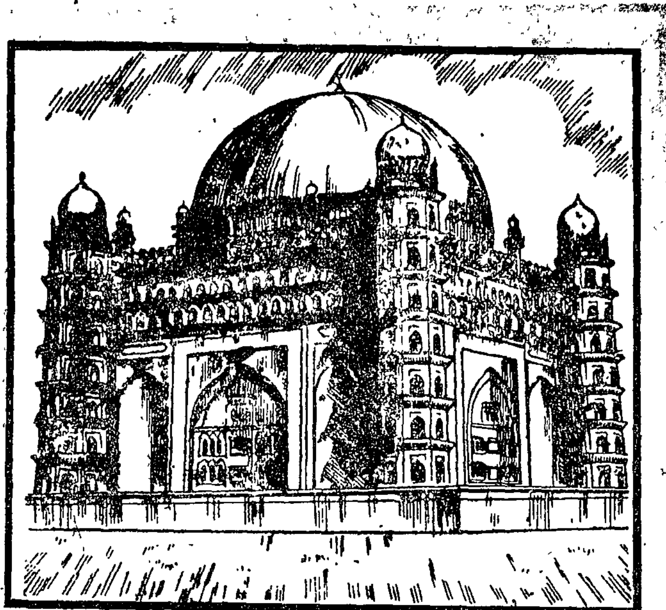


Fig. 27. Gol Gumbas

The Mughal monarchs were great builders and lovers of art. In their days, there "was a happy mingling of Persian and Indian art traditions." The art and architecture of the Sultanate period continued to flourish and slowly and steadily transformed itself into the Indo-Saracenic architecture and reached the zenith of its glory in the Mughal days.

The decorative features of the Hindu and Jain temples were copied, namely, square pillar and rows of small arches. The central dome of Mughal architecture was inspired by the Buddhist Viharas.

The most important buildings of Akbar are the *Tomb of Humayun* at Delhi and the *Fatehpur Sikri*. The *Buland Darwaza* or the Triumphal Archway as well as the marble mosque, at Fatehpur Sikri proclaim the glory of Mughal architecture. The

noteworthy structure in Jahangir's time was the *Tomb of Itmad-ud-daulah* at Agra built by Nurjahan over her father's grave.

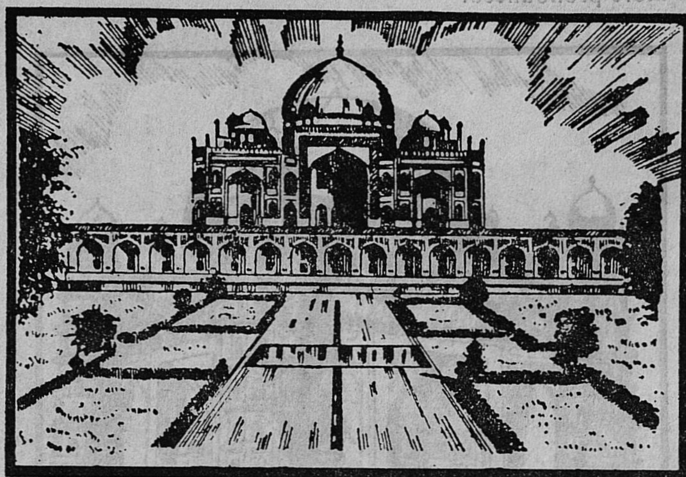


Fig. 28. Tomb of Humayun

Nurjahan also built the Tomb of Jahangir at Shahdara near Lahore. Akbar designed his own tomb at Sikandara. It was begun in 1605 and completed later by Jahangir.

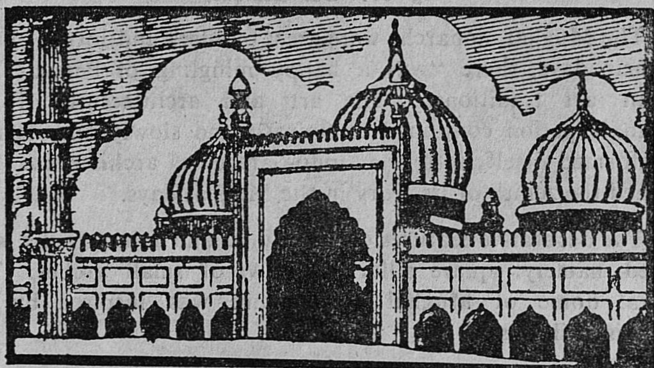


Fig. 29. Jumma Masjid

Shahjahan was the most magnificent builder of the Mughal Age. The most important buildings of his reign are the *Red*

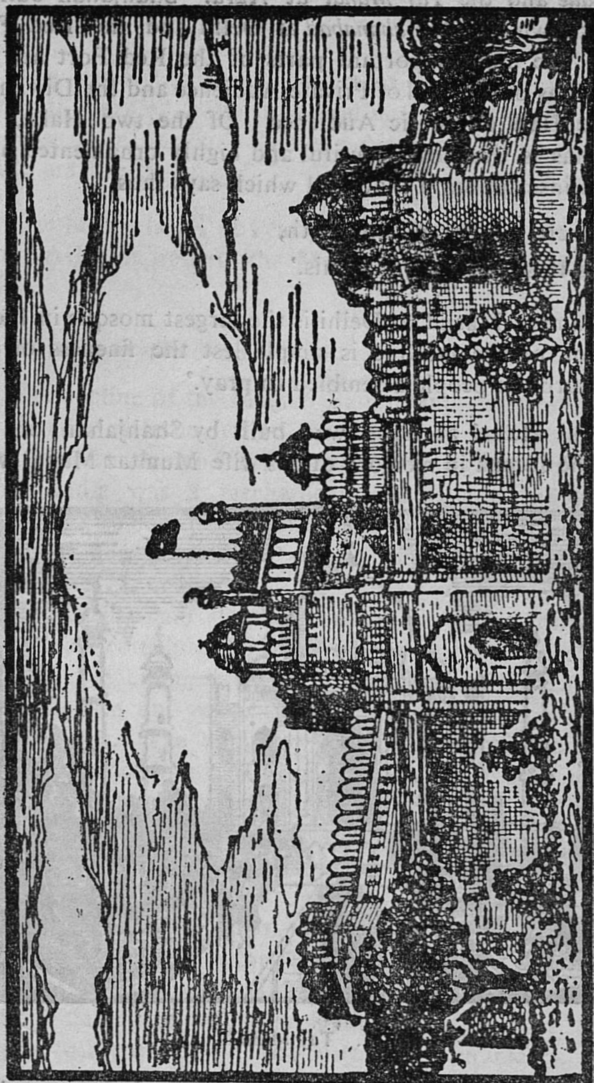


Fig. 30. Red Fort

Fort and the *Jumma Masjid* at Delhi and the *Moti Masjid or the Pearl Mosque* and the *Taj Mahal* at Agra. Shahjahan built a new city known as *Shahjahanabad* at Delhi and the Red Fort within it. The most important parts of the Red Fort are the Diwani-I-Khas or the Hall of Private Audience and the Diwani-I-Am or the Hall of Public Audience. Of the two Halls, the Diwani Khas is the most beautiful and highly ornamented hall. There is an inscription in that Hall which says thus,

'If there is a Paradise in earth,
It is this, it is this, it is this.'

The Jumma Masjid at Delhi is the largest mosque in India. The interior of the mosque is simple lest the fineness of art should disturb the people assembled to pray.'

The Taj Mahal at Agra was built by Shahjahan on the banks of the Jumna in memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal who

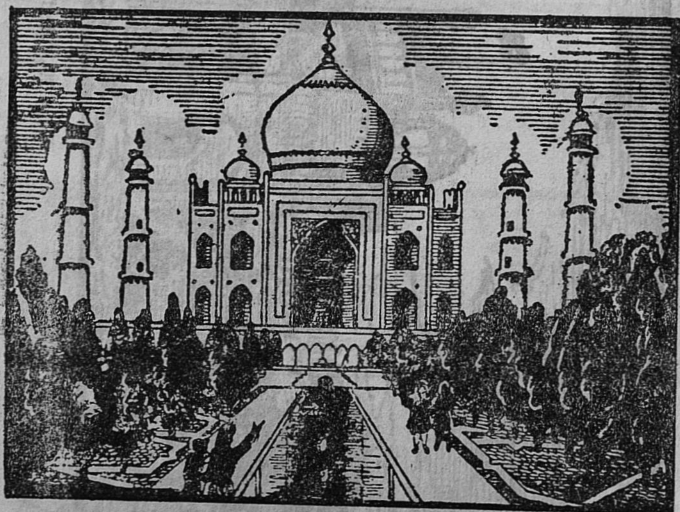


Fig. 31. Taj Mahal

died in 1630. Prominent artisans were invited from various countries and they constructed the Mausoleum under the guidance of Ustad Isa. It cost the Emperor nearly 3½ crores of

rupees and it took 23 years to complete the construction with 20,000 workers working daily.

The Taj is the finest monument of conjugal love. It is a 'dream in marble.' The structural portions of the Taj were done by Muslim craftsmen, while the decorative work was done by Hindu craftsmen.

The Moti Masjid or Pearl Mosque at Agra built flawless of white marble represents the Mughal style of architecture at its zenith.

Indo-British Architecture

The decline of the Mughal Empire and the establishment of British rule in India led to the decline of Indian Art, because there was no demand for artistic buildings. Architecture in British India was a mechanical process and buildings were constructed to suit the requirements of British Administration. Under the new pattern the old artisan or craftsman had no scope to use his imagination; he worked only for the wages he earned. Utility and simplicity were the watchwords of Indo-British architecture. The materials used in the construction of buildings also changed with the beginning of the 20th century. Brick, chunam and wood were replaced by cement, iron and patent paints. The bungalows, factories, forts and cathedrals, were built according to European style. Bombay government offices, the Lahore Railway station, the palaces of Gwalior and Baroda and the Victoria Memorial in Calcutta are but a few examples of various European architectural styles.

The skill of the Indian craftsman however found scope in the following ways. After the passing of The Preservation of Historical Monuments Act of Lord Curzon, employment opportunities came to Indian 'master builders, as they were engaged to repair the ancient historical monuments. In South India many temple managements gave employment to master builders learned in the silpa sastras to renovate old temples or build new ones. The skill of the master builders was requisitioned in Indian States particularly in Rajputana to build

beautiful palaces. Benares, the Holy City of the Hindus had once a fine water front adorned by ancient temples and monasteries. They were all destroyed by Aurangazeb. Under the

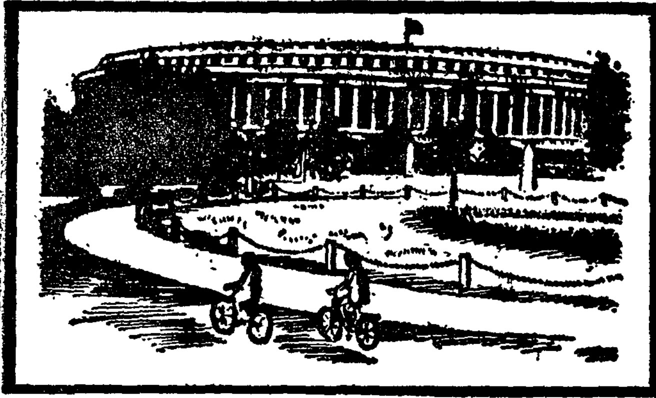


Fig. 32. Parliament

British Benares came to have modern buildings. Recently temples were built with the help of master builderes and some of these modern temples are architecturally interesting.

British built structures guided Indian architects. The European style was soon followed by a period when there was a blending of the rich Indian tradition with European design. An example of this was the construction of New Delhi by *Sri Edwin Lutyens* and *Sri Edward Baker* in the 1930s. At first these architects wanted to build the city on neo-roman style, but on account of opposition from such eminent persons as *George Bernard Shaw* and *Sri William Rothenstein*, they revised their plans to incorporate Indian motifs. But the product did not turn out to be a synthesis of styles, but a collection of uninspiring patterns. This was because New Delhi was built at a time when the old style had lost its vigour and the new style had not yet developed to perfection. Chandigarh which is the capital of the Punjab and Haryana states had been built by a French architect and it looks more artistic than New Delhi.

PAINTING

Beginnings of Paintings

Both Buddhist and Brahmanical literature, some of which go back to centuries before Christ, contain abundant references to the art of painting in Ancient India. From very early times painting, both secular and religious, was regarded as an important form of artistic expression and it was practised by all classes of people. From the Brahmanas and the Buddhist Sutras, we learn that there were traditions and practice of Painting and this led latter on to the formulation of a theory, technique and classification of painting.

We have no specimens of painting in very early times. The earliest historical paintings are the figures on the ceiling of the Sitabenga or Jogimara cave in the Ramgarh Hills in the Surguja state of the Eastern States Agency. As there is a similarity between the dress of Jogimara figures and the garment of the Sanchi Stupa figures, Jogimara paintings have been assigned to the 2nd half or middle of the first century B.C.

Ajanta Paintings

The art of painting reached its height of glory in the Gupta Age. The paintings in some of the caves at Ajanta go to prove that the skill of the Indian painters was admirable. The cave paintings at Ajanta belong to different periods, some to the first century B.C. and others to a later period. But the best paintings belong to the Gupta period (4th century A.D.) The colours used in the Ajanta paintings are still bright, even after the lapse of several centuries. They give pleasure to the eyes and the mind.

All of them are full of expression. Various human emotions such as love, fear and hatred have been successfully portrayed. The animals, birds and flowers are realistic. The best paintings in the Ajanta caves are the *Dying Princess* and the *Mother* and *Child.*

Paintings have also been found at the *Bagh Caves* in Gwalior state and they are regarded by art critics as 'Paintings of high

merit and infinite variety' and as good as Ajanta. The paintings at *Sigiria* in Ceylon belong to the close of the 5th century A.D, but they do not come upto the level of Ajanta. Similarly the Jain cave paintings at *Sittannavasal* in the Pudukottai district of Tamil Nadu belong to the period of Mahendravarma Pallava (7th century A.D.). Chola paintings of the eleventh century A.D have been discovered in the Brahadeesvara Temple at Tanjore.

Mughal Paintings—Regional Schools

As Islam was opposed to idol worship and images, sculpture was not a well developed art in the Islamic countries. But in regard to painting, the later Caliphs declared that figures might be painted in residential buildings, but not in religious structures. Hence, the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphs of Asia had their palace walls decorated with floral designs and even human figures. Babar, the first Mughal king was a lover of painting and he employed painters to paint flowers, springs and streams. Humayun developed a taste for painting while he was an exile in Persia. When he was resorted to the Delhi throne, he invited two famous painters *Mir Sayyid Ali* and *Khwaja Abdus Samad*. His early death did not allow great works of painting to be completed.

Akbar was greately interested in painting and set up a department under Khwaja Abdus Samad. In the 16th century there were in North India three schools of painting, *the Rajput*, *the Jammu* and *the Kangra*, but of the three the Rajput style became popular and spread beyond Rajasthan to Kashmir, Mathura and Benaras. The Rajput style was highly expressive and colourful. The eyes of the figures were almost hypnotic with all expression conveyed through postures and poses of the body. Akbar was a great admirer of the realistic simplicity of the Rajput style and of the delicacy, linear grace and decoration of the Persian style. He invited painters from all over India and a National Indian school of painting arose. Most of the painters were Hindus and the most important among them were *Daswant, Basawan, Sanwal Das, Tarachand* and *Jagannath*. The leading Muslim painters were *Abdus Samad, Mir Sayyid Ali* and *Farukh Beg*. The importance of painting is emphasised in the

Ain-i-Akbari, The *Akbar Nama*, *Nala Damayanthi* of Faizi, the Persian version of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharatha* contain paintings which are good art specimens.

Like his father, Jahangir gave an impetus to the art of painting, Sir Thomas Roe who visited the Mughal court in the time of Jahangir testifies to the fact that Jahangir was a great lover of painting. He had a keen aesthetic sense and loved the beauties of nature. He was so attracted to Kashmir that he visited it 13 times during the 22 years of his reign. He favoured naturalism in art, and the painting of landscapes, animals and portraits reached its zenith during his reign. *Ustad Mansur* was the most famous bird and animal painter of Jahangir's reign.

Shah Jahan was more interested in architecture and he therefore neglected painting. A few nobles patronised painting, and Asafkhan, his father-in-law was one of them. Asafkhan's mansion in Lahore was decorated with paintings. Dara Shikoh was a lover of painting but his unfortunate end in the war of succession left the painters without a patron.

Aurangazeb as an orthodox Muslim did not encourage painters. He even white washed the paintings in Akbar's Mausoleum at Sikandara. But some nobles encouraged painters who painted their mansions. Towards the close of the Mughal period, many of the painters migrated to the mofussil cities in the Gangetic valley and the Deccan where they received encouragement.

The Mughal school of painting rose and declined with the great Mughals. It began under Akbar, reached its climax under Jahangir and declined under Shah Jahan and Aurangazeb. While the Hindu art (Ajanta paintings) was spiritual and symbolic, the Mughal art portrayed the materialistic life of the court, with its state functions, processions, hunting expeditions etc. There were also paintings of flowers, animals, birds and natural objects, but the art was not meant for the common people. It was patronised by the emperor and the nobles, and outside the court, little was known of its existence.

The *Deccan school of painting* arose as a consequence of the flight of painters from the Mughal court to the courts of the Deccani sultans. It was an offshoot of Mughal painting and had the same features as its Mughal counterpart.

The *Rajput school of painting* flourished in the courts of the Rajput chiefs. The Hindu artists portrayed the life of the common people, their beliefs, manners and traditions. Romance, love and devotion were portrayed in popular deities like Sankara, Parvathi, Krishna, and Radha. The Rajput paintings were characterised by brilliancy of colour and minuteness of decorative detail.

Western Influence and Modern Revival

Western education in which aesthetic values did not find an important place was not conducive to artistic development in India.

The Indian artists managed to retain their traditional forms and skills, because of their pride in their rich heritage. Towards the end of the 19th century a reaction against imitating Europe set in. This spirit of renaissance helped a finer appreciation and cultivation of the Fine Arts of India such as painting and music. Dr. Abaindranath Tagore has taught and inspired a group of artists. He has been followed by Nandalal Bose of Bengal and Abdur Rahman Chaghatai of the Panjab. The Bombay school of Art has developed a new style by the application of western technique and methods, to current Indian conditions. In Kerala Raja Ravi Varma painted a number of pictures influenced by the modern technique. The artistic renaissance of India owes a great deal to E. B. Havell, Principal of the Government school of Art in Calcutta and Dr. A.K. Coomaraswamy, who did much to preach the glory and greatness of Indian art. New schools of Art arose and there has been a revival of Indian painting. But the modern painting is an integration of past and present, a synthesis of East and West. Modern Indian painters follow the style and technique of Modern Europe, especially of France, but they depict scenes and peoples in recognizably Indian manner. Rabindranath Tagore in his Viswabharathi University introduced

painting as one of the subjects to be taught and this has given an impetus in Bengal to the development of this fine art.

Indian art since 1930 has been passing through a period of transition, developing fairly regional identities in the Indian context. Jamini Roy in Bengal expressed in his art racial and national genius. He was a lonely figure and he was not able to change the trends in Indian Art. Devi Prasad Roy Chaudhri pioneered in the field of sculpture but others went beyond him to exploit new styles and they are Ramkinker Dhanraj Bhagat, Janakiram and Nandagopal. The Sangeetha Nataka Academy and the Lalit Kala Academy set up by the Government of India at Delhi are bringing together through dramas and exhibitions of art, the artists and art organisations. They also award prizes to the best artists. Exchange of ideas between artists helps the development of art. Sri. K.C.S. Panikkar of Madras through the progressive Painters Association and Cholamandal complex has helped the South Indian Artists to achieve something of permanent value. One thing is certain. There is no going back to cheap imitation of the West. Indian Art has proved itself to be truly Indian.

MUSIC AND DANCE

Music and Dance in Ancient India

Music in India is as old as the Vedas. The Sama Veda is the song book of the Aryans. It contains a number of verses taken from the Rig Veda and adapted for singing at the Soma sacrifice by a special class of priests. Dancing should have existed in the period of the indus valley civilisation for there has been discovered at Mohanjodaro a dancing figure like that of Nataraja. In Vedic times music and dance were popular. A passage from the Chandogya Upanishad is illuminating. I have studied the Vedas, the Epics, and mythological poems, the art of war, astronomy and the fine arts (Music and dance).

In the Mauryan period dancing, singing and instrumental music formed an important part of all festivities. Courtesans were given training in music, dance and acting by qualified

teachers. The king, his court and the public patronized beautiful and accomplished courtesans, some of whom were employed as spies. Dancing was generally confined to the courtesan class in Mauryan, Gupta and Harsha times. In South India also it was so, for, we find from *Silappadhikaram*, a Tamil classic of the early centuries of the Christian era, that Madhavi, a courtesan dancer attracts Kovalan and draws him away from his wife Kannaki. The interest in dancing is shown by innumerable sculptures, depicting dancing postures.

Music was patronised by the Gupta kings and Samudragupta was himself a musician as some of his coins show him playing on the veena.

It must be noticed that the Hindus used music for religious and secular purposes. The Nayanmars and Alwars sang devotional songs and music was the vehicle of Bhakthi. Chaitanya, Mirabai, Kabirdas, Namadev, Tukaram and Ramdas similary sang devotional songs to bring worshippers into close communion with God. All the Hindu monarchs patronised music and musicians. The Kudumiyanmalai (Pudukottai Dist. — Tamilnadu) music incriptions of Mahendravarma Pallava not only shows his interest in music but also reveals his expert knowledge in music.

Music in Muslim India

Muslims at first were not interested in music but they soon acquired an affection for them. Islamic music first came to Sind with the Arabs and was soon blended with the prevalent Indian system. The divine service in the mosque was performed without vocal or intrumental music, but when Muslim rulers saw that Hindu life was full of music they adopted it into their social life. Muslim Sufi saints who were as fond of music as the Hindu Bhaktas, introduced it in their congregational meetings where songs of divine love known as Qawalis were sung.

Alauddin Khilji had a number of accomplished musicians in his court. Singers and dancers—Hindu, Turkish and Persian—resided permanently at Muslim Darbars, often under the headship of a Persian officer. Devotional songs such as bhairavi,

sarasrag, kalengra and bhairon were sung at religious gatherings, and in Darbar. The music that was sung in North India during Muslim rule was a fusion of Indo-Iranian music. The famous Muslim poet Amir Khusru was a melodious singer. As Persian modes were introduced into the music of Northern India, North Indian music became a little different from that of South India. Many Indian musical instruments owe their origin to Muslim artists, for instance tabla, dilruba, sarod, and maqqara.

The synthesis of Hindu and Muslim musical elements which had taken place in the Sultanate period developed into a highly devoloped musical art form under the patronage of the Mughal Emperors. Music reached its zenith in the reign of Akbar. The celebrated musician Tansen enjoyed the patronage of Akbar. Tansen's disciples gave rise to various schools of music. It is said that when the Mughals returned to the north after their conquest of the Deccan, they took with them the most famous South Indian musicians along with other artists and sculptors.

Music in Muslim India was popular because the majority of Muslims were Hindu converts and they were disinclined to give up their music. Even today some of the best known Indian musicians are Muslims such as Ali Akbar Khan, Bismillah Khan and the famous Nadaswaram musician of Tamil Nadu, Chinna Moulana Sahib.

The medieval period was an age of great musicians both Hindu and Muslim. The great poet singers, Tulsidas, Surdas and Mirabai belong to this period. Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan patronised music but Aurangazeb did not encourage it. But by that time North Indian music called Hindustani, had already established itself.

As in Ancient India, dancing was done during this period by a professional class of women. Dancing was one of the entertainments of the Muslim Age and there was a group of dancers, Hindu and Muslim attached to each court. The Peshwas of Maharashtra delighted to witness the dance performances of professionals. Mastani, the mistress of Peshwa

Baji Rao-I was famous for her beauty, wit, music and dancing and she wielded considerable influence over the Peshwa.

Music and Dance in British India

Dance and music in India were not influenced by European styles. There were a few changes in popular cinema music. Modern musical compositions have adopted western techniques. Some Indian composers, such as Sarabji, have written music in western styles, sometimes using Indian motifs. Ali Akbar Khan sometimes incorporated a certain amount of harmony and western melodies into his songs.

Indian music which has not been affected by foreign influences is called Carnatic music because it is preserved in its pristine purity in South India. The three characteristics of Carnatic Music are the following: (1) Carnatic Music gives as much importance to melody as any other music. There are different *Ragas* and the science of Carnatic Music lays down rules for the singing of each Raga. (2) Timing is very important in Carnatic Music. Music has to be sung according to *tala*. (3) Most of the composers of Carnatic Music have composed songs only in praise of God. They are devotional songs. They help to develop Bhakti. They are in different languages like Sanskrit, Telugu, Malayalam and Tamil. The three great exponents of Carnatic Music, often called the *Trinity* are Thyaga Brahmam of Tiruvaiyaru, Muthuswamy Dikshithar and Sama Sastry. Swathi Thirunal, a former Maharaja of Travancore has composed songs set to Carnatic Music.

To advance the cause of Carnatic Music conferences are held annually at Madras where great exponents of this class of music meet and discuss about the significance of Ragas and the way they should be sung. At the Samadhi of Thyaga Brahmam at Tiruvaiyaru in Tanjore district, all the Carnatic musicians, vocal and instrumental give musical concerts in memory of the great musician composer, on the anniversary of his death. The compositions of the Carnatic Musical Trinity are a treasure which delights the ear, ennobles the mind, and purifies the soul. The Sangeet Natak Academy at Delhi awards prizes every year

to the best musician of the year and it has so far honoured among others Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi, Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar and Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar.

Along with Carnatic Music which has not been influenced by outside influence, there is the popular cinema music. While Carnatic Music is devotional, cinema music is mainly secular, with emphasis on love and sex. In Tamilnadu the famous composer of film songs was Kannadasan and the most popular cinema songsters who supply background music are Thiru. T. M. Soundararajan and Smt. P. Suseela. In the Hindi cinema world, the most outstanding singers are Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhonsle, Kishore Kumar and Vani Jayaram.

The world has come to know how to appreciate its richness and variety in the great performances of Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi and Ravi Shankar. Mass communications media and government initiative have truly made Indian music what it is today. Illustrated texts of Indian music are among the traditional products characteristic of the pre-British India. They are the residual impressions of a pastoral culture that is rapidly fading away.

As in the case of music, so in dance the pristine uncontaminated dance is called Bharata Natyam. It is so called because its technique was written by Sage Baratha in the 2nd century A.D. Dance was related to religion in early days and Devadasis or dancing girls were attached to temples and maintained by temple funds. Though Bharatha Natyam was considered to be divine, dedicated to Lord Nataraja, a stigma was attached to the girls who performed the dance. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy, the founder of the Adyar Cancer Institute campaigned against the Devadasi system, and in 1925 by an Act of the Madras Legislature, it was abolished.

In recent times Rukmani Arundale of the Adyar Theosophical Society, popularised the Bharatha Natyam by encouraging girls of decent families to take to it as a hobby. The Kalakshetra at Adyar stands for the promotion of this ancient art, the pride of India. Recently Bala Saraswathy, an expert in

Bharatha Natyam was honoured by the Government of India for her services to the cause of this ancient art and Rukmani Arundale was nominated to the Rajya Sabha for her contribution to the preservation of the best in Indian culture. Tmt. Vijayanthimala, Tmt. Padmini are also exponents of Bharatha Natyam though in cinemas they play oriental dances. There are also cabarat dances, hotel dances and dances according to western technique which are popular among the masses. Then there are folk dances like Kathakali, Karakam and Kavadi dances which are partly religious and partly secular. They are a source of entertainment to rural folk and they help to bring people together.

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

In Ancient India

Our country can boast of a highly developed literature in Sanskrit and Tamil from very early times. The Vedic Literature is the earliest literature of our land. The Vedic Hymns were handed down orally from generation to generation and at a later period they were set down in writing and edited by Sage Vyasa. In course of time, the Brahmanas and Upanishads were composed by scholars. The Brahmanas are prose explanations relating to Brahman, prayer and sacrificial ceremony. The Upanishads contain the philosophical speculations of Ancient India and may be described as the literature of spiritual power. From the Vedic literature we are able to know the political, social, religious and economic conditions of India from 2000—1000 B.C. The Vedas as well as the Brahmanas and Upanishads are written in Sanskrit language.

The two great Epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharatha* are the next important literary works of Ancient India. They have been written like the Vedas, in Sanskrit. The author of the Ramayana was Valmiki and the author of Mahabharatha was Sage Vyasa. The best part of the Mahabharatham is the *Bhagavad Gita* which contains the quintessence of the Hindu religion.

The two Epics have been translated into regional languages. Tulsi Das in the reign of Akbar translated the Ramayana into Hindi and in its Hindi form it is called *Rama Charita Manas*. Kambar, the great Tamil poet who lived in the 12th century in the court of the Chola King wrote *Kamba Ramayana*. The *Mahabharatham* has been rendered into Tamil by Villiputhurar and Perundevanar. The two Epics are national epics and Hindus all over India delight to hear the stories of the Epics from seasoned speakers known as Pouranikas or Bhagavatars. The Epics form a bond of unity among the people of this great country and help to promote national integration.

After the rise of Buddhism, a number of books were written expounding the principles of Buddhism. The early religious books of the Buddhists constitute the Tripitaka, that is, the Sutta Pitaka, the Vinaya Pitaka and the Abhidamma Pitaka. The Pitakas were written in Pali, the oldest literary form of Prakrit, in the 3rd century B.C. The Sutta Pitaka contains the sermons of the Buddha and his chief disciples and is a popular exposition of the Dhamma or the Law. The Vinaya Pitaka is concerned with monastic discipline and the Abhidamma Pitaka is a detailed and highly technical exposition of the Dhamma.

Besides the Tripitaka, there were the Dhammapada, the Theragatha, the Therigatha and the Jataka Tales. The last mentioned work describes the previous lives of the Buddha.

In the early centuries of the Christian era Tamil Nadu produced a fine literature known as the Sangam literature. These literary works are said to have been the work of three sangams or Boards of Literary Censors, that are supposed to have flourished in the capitals of the Pandyas, the latest of which being Madurai. The accounts of the first two Sangams are not available, except *Tolkappiyam*, a work assigned to the Second Sangam. The Third Sangam at Madurai has a number of works to its credit such as *Pathuppattu* (Ten poems), *Ettuthogai* (Eight collections), *Pathinenkil Kanakku (Eighteen Minor Works)* and the two Epics, *Silappadikaram* and *Manimekhalai*. The famous *Thirukural* composed by Thiruvalluwar is one of the Pathinenkil Kannakku. The importance of *Kural* may be

learnt from the fact that it has been translated into many languages in the world.

The next important period in Indian History for literary activity was the Age of the Guptas. Kalidasa, one of the Nine Gems of the Courts of Chandragupta Vikramaditya was the greatest of the Sanskrit poets and dramatists. He wrote three dramas namely, *Sakuntala*, *Vikramaoorvasi* and *Malavikagnimitra*. The other literary works of Kalidasa are the two epic poems, the *Raghuvamsa* and the *Kumarasambhava* and the two lyric poems, the *Mehadhuta* and the *Ritusamhara*.

Kalidasa was not the only great poet of the Gupta Age. There were many other literary men who made a rich contribution to Sanskrit literature. Sudraka wrote the *Mrichchakatika* or *Little Clay Cart*. Visakhadatta wrote a drama *Mudrarakshasa* which deals with the Maghadan Revolution. Another great poet of the period was Bharavi whose *Kiratarjunaiya* is an epic poem describing the combat between Siva disguised as a Kirata or hunter and Arjuna.

The most original of Indian literature is its folk-lore represented by the Panchathandra. It assumed its present shape during the Gupta period. ' It has enriched for many centuries ', as Macdonnel observes, ' the literature of the three continents of Asia, Africa and Europe and has exercised an extraordinary influence on the narrative works of the Middle Ages '. Probably no book except the Bible has been translated into so many languages, certainly no secular book. No other country has produced so extensive a literature of stories as India. Its migration to the other parts of the world borders on the marvellous.

Even sex became the subject matter of serious study and Vatsyayana wrote the *Kamasutra*.

Vararuchi wrote his famous *Prakritprakasa*, an important grammatical work in Prakrit. Amarasimha composed his *Amarakosa*, a book of synonyms,

Buddhaghosha who belonged to Magadha, studied Buddhism in Ceylon and gained fame as a commentator on the Tripitaka.

In the Gupta Age Sanskrit became the language of the cultured. While Asoka made use of Prakrit in his edicts Sanskrit came to be used by the Guptas. The Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Harisena, Commander-in-chief of Samudragupta, is written in Classical Sanskrit; the legends in the Gupta coins are in Sanskrit.

In the field of Mathematics, Astronomy and Medicine great men wrote important books. Aryabhatta, the famous astronomer in his *Ariyabhatta* mentions the daily rotation of the earth on its axis and describes the true causes of eclipses. Varahamihira, another astronomer wrote *Panchasiddhantika*, *Brihatsamhita* and *Brihatjataka*. In medicine Vriddha Vaghabatta, the author of *Astranghirdya* and *Danvantri* are great names in the Gupta period.

In the reign of Harsha who reigned in the 7th century the most important literary works were Bana's *Harsha Charita* and *Kadambari* and Harsha's three Sanskrit dramas, namely, *Ratnavali*, *Nagananda* and *Priyadarsika*.

In South India, particularly in Tamil Nadu there was literary activity under the Pallavas and Later Chola kings. The devotional songs of the Nayanmars known as *Thevaram* were compiled by Nambi Andar Nambi and those of the Alwars known as *Nalayira Divya Prabandam* were codified by Nathamuni. Manickavasagar, a great Saiva Saint wrote his famous *Tiruvachakam*.

Chola contribution to Tamil Literature was great *Jivaka Chintamani* a great classic of Tiruttakka Thevar, a Jain, *Kundalakesi*, a Buddhist work and *Kalladam* of the poet Kalladanar belong to the Chola period. *Jayankondar's Kalingatthupparani* dealing with the conquest of Kalinga by Kulothunga Chola, Kambar's Ramayana', *Pugalendi's Nalavenba Bhavanandi's Nannool* and *Sekkizhar's Periyapuranam* or *Tirutthondar puranam* all belong to the period of the later Cholas.

The Cholas, besides patronising Tamil poets, also promoted Sanskrit learning. Sanskrit colleges were founded. Rajaraja II ordered the compilation of an alphabetical Sanskrit Lexicon the *Nanantharnava—Samkshepa* of Kesasvamin.

The period from the death of Harsha to the Muslim invasions of Muhammed Ghazni is called the Rajput Age as there were a number of Rajput Kingdoms in North India. The contribution of the Rajput Kings to Sanskrit literature was great. In drama we have the names of Bhavabuti who was patronised by Yasovarman of Kanauj, Rajasekhara who lived in the court of Mahendrapala of Kanauj and Jayadeva who was the court poet of Lakshmanasena of Bengal. In Kashmir Somadeva wrote his collection of stories called *Kathasaritasagara* in the 11th century and *Kalhana* wrote his famous *Rajatarangini* or Chronicle of Kashmir Kings in the middle of the 12th century.

In Mediaeval India

The Muslim conquest of India resulted in the decline of Sanskrit literature: Persian, Hindi and Urdu became the most important languages along with the regional languages. The emphasis of the Bhakti movement on the mother-tongue gave an impetus to Hindi and other literatures. Amir Khusru, 'the prince of poets' wrote a number of poems in the Persian language.

In South India the Vijayanagar Empire made a big contribution to Telugu literature. *Krishna Deva Raya's* reign is called 'the Augustan Age of Telugu Literature'. The scholars who adorned his court were called the '*Ashtadiggajas*.' Allasani Peddhanna one of the Ashtadiggajas, was the court poet of Krishna Deva Raya and was proficient in Sanskrit and Telugu. He was called the *Andhra-Kavi-Pitamaha* or *Grand-father of Telugu poetry.* His most important work was *Manucharita.* Krishna Deva Raya was himself the author of literary works in Sanskrit and Telugu. He wrote two Sanskrit plays, *Jambavati Kalyanam* and *Usha Parinayam.* His Telugu work *Amuktamalyada* or *Vishnuchittiyamu* is a devotional poem dealing with Vishnuchitta, the foster-father of Sri Andal.

The Mughal Age was productive of great Persian and Hindi literature. Babar was proficient in Turki and Persian. His lyrical poem *Diwani Babar* and his autobiography, *Babar Nama* were written in Turki language.

Persian literature made great progress in the time of Akbar. Abul Fazl wrote the *Akbar Nama* and Ain-I-Akbari. Nizamuddin wrote *Annals of Akbar* and Badauni wrote *Muntakhab-ul-Tawarikh.*

A large number of books were translated into Persian in the reign of Akbar. Badauni was a scholar in Sanskrit and he translated the Ramayana and a portion of the Mahabaratha. Ibrahim Sirhindi translated the Atharva Veda. Abul Faizi, brother of Abul Fazl translated into Persian *Lilavathi*, a work on Arithmetic.

Gulbadan Begam, Babar's daughter wrote an account of her brother *Humayun Nama* at the request of Akbar.

The reign of Akbar is an important epoch in the history of Hindi Literature. Birbal, the Kavi Raj was famous for his witty and humorous verse. Perhaps the greatest figure in Hindi Literature was Tulsi Das, the author of *Rama Charit Manas.* Sir George Grierson thinks that Tulsi Das is 'the most important figure in the whole of Indian Literature.' Another important Hindi writer was Sur Das, the blind bard of Agra. In his *Sur Sagar* and *Suravali* he has given a description of the sports of Lord Krishna in his childhood and also the beauty of Krishna and Radha. Some writers place Surdas above Tulsi Das saying that 'Sur is the Sun and Tulsi, the Moon.'

Among the writers of Shah Jahan's reign, Abdul Hamid Lahori, the author of *Padshanama* was the most important. Shah Jahan's eldest and favourite son, Darashukov was a student of the Vedanta and Sufi literature and of the New Testament. His *Mingling of the Two Oceans* is a comparative study of Hinduism and Islam. He translated the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita into Persian with the help of the Pandits of Varanasi.

Jagannatha Panditaraja, the Sanskrit poet-rhetorician was patronised by Dara and Shah Jahan. He wrote a number of poems about his patrons, Asaf-Khan father-in-law of Shah Jahan and Darashukov. His *Rasagongadhara* and *Bhaminivilasa* are the most important works in Sanskrit.

The English Impact and the Growth of Regional Literature

The influence of English literature on the literature of Indian languages was intensive. Poetry had been composed in India since the days of the Rig Veda, but prose came to be written as a result of the Western impact. Begun as arguments for and against religious and social reform, prose forms, rapidly reached perfection. Novels, short stories, essays and drama developed in Indian writing—the short story particularly in the 20th century.

Bengal led the other provinces in the matter of regional literature. Among the Bengali writers, Rabindranath Tagore, occupies the pride of place both in prose and poetry. His famous poem *Gitanjali* got for him the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913. He wrote many novels, dramas and short stories. *Gora* and *the Wreck* are considered to be his best novels. The National Anthem of India *Jana Gana Mana* was composed by him. His famous Viswabharathi University at Shantiniketan stands for the preservation of Indian culture. He was very proud of Indian culture and called upon the west to appreciate Indian culture. Besides literary subjects fine arts were taught in Shantiniketan. Through Viswabharathi Tagore attempted to harmonise the ideals of East and West and to broaden the bases of Indian nationalism. Tagore was a world citizen, he was an internationalist.

Next to Tagore, the important Bengali writers were Bankim Chandra Chatterjeo and Iswara Chandra Vidyasagar. The former wrote *Vande Matharam.*

In Maharashtra, Kesavasudhar, the 'Father of Modern Marathi Literature' and Bal Gangadhar Tilak were the most important writers.

Telugu literature produced two great writers, namely Veeresalingam Panthulu and Desodharaka Nageswara Rao.

Panthulu was the creator of modern Telugu literature. His novel *Rajasekhara Charitram* is considered, a classic. He translated *Sakuntalam* and *Ratnavali* from Sanskrit into Telugu. Nageswara Rao worked for the growth of the modern newspaper.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, there was a remarkable development of Tamil literature. The court of Maratha King, Serfoji Raja of Tanjore became the meeting ground of literary men and many a writer received royal patronage. Tandavaraya Mudaliar wrote in good prose *Panchatantra.*

Perhaps the greatest of the Tamil poets of the 19th century was Ramalinga Swamigal whose *Tiruvarutpa* is a marvellous collection of devotional poems. Another writer of the same century was Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai, the Guru of Dr. U. V. Swaminatha Aiyar. H. A. Krishna Pillai and Umaru Pulavar also made valuable contributions. The former's *Rakshinya Yatrikam* and the latter's *Seera Puranam* are important literary pieces.

In the 20th century Dr. U. V. Swaminatha Aiyar collected the ancient Tamil classics and published them. Maraimalai Adigal, Thivu. Vi. Ka., Dr. R. Sethupillai and Dr. C.N. Annadurai have made significant contributions to Tamil Literature.

An outstanding poet of the 20th century was Mahakavi Subramania Bharathi. His strong point was patriotic poetry He has also composed poems on traditional and Puranic themes. His poems roused patriotism and zeal for social reform. He was followed by Nammakkal Thiru V. Ramalingam Pillai a great national poet, who was appointed as poet Laureate of Tamil Nadu. His poems breathe national fervour and Ghandian ideals.

Another outstanding poet of this century was Bharatidasan His poems *Pandian Parisu* and *Kudumba Vilakku* are greatly appreciated. Kavimani Desiga Vinayagam Pillai was another popular Tamil poet of this period.

One result of the English education was the rise of Indo-Anglians. Indo-Anglians are those Indians who have contri-

buted the finest poems and specimen of prose in the English language. The most important Indo-Anglians are Sarojini Naidu, the *Nightingale of India* and the authoress of a number of poems like the *Palaniquin bearers*, Jawaharlal Nehru, who has written *Autobiography*, *Discovery of India*, *Glimpses of World History* in classical English prose, Mahatma Gandhi whose *Experiments with the Truth* is written in simple faultless King's English, R. K. Narayan the famous novelist and short story writer and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan who has written a number of books on philosophy in superb English. The books written by above mentioned writers constitute what is known as Indo-Anglian Literature'.

VIII. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN INDIA

From early times India recognised the importance of science and technology. The progress attained in these fields of knowledge during the ancient period was remarkable. However, this trend did not continue during the medieval period, mainly because of foreign invasions and internal turmoils. After the beginning of modern times India drew closer to western sciences. There emerged several scientists and technologists, who placed India in the main stream of scientific advancement.

The origin of Indian sciences can be traced to the Indus Valley Civilization. The planning and architecture of the cities of Mohenjodaro and Harappa indicate that the people had acquired a sound knowledge of simple geometry. The construction of drains, having brick manhole covers, the manufacture of cotton cloth and the use of metals like copper and bronze suggest that they attained great progress in technology. There flourished a merchant class, through whom a commercial arithmetic too developed. It is believed that the Indus people invented the wheel, which revolutionised the communications.

The Vedic Literature give only fragmentary information about sciences, though the early Aryans did not ignore their study. In the making of the Vedic altars they followed the principles of geometrical algebra. Search for auspicious moments for the performance of Vedic rites and ceremonies led them to the study of stars and taking of an interest in astronomy. The Vedic Indians observed the celestial bodies, the bright wandering objects, the course of the planets and comets and the eclipses of the sun as well as of the moon.

The period that followed the Vedic Age was one of great empires, of which the Maurya Empire, the Gupta Empire and the Harsha Empire were the most famous. In the South, the Cholas and the Andhras had their sway. Political stability, maritime activity and overseas expansion gave a great stimulus to

the growth of science and technology. In the educational institutions founded by the Buddhists, the Jains and the Hindus the different sciences were taught.

The contacts with the ancient Greeks helped the growth of astronomy in India. The Garhi Samhita says : 'The Yavanas are barbarians, but the science of astronomy originated with them and for this they must be reverenced like gods'. There emerged in India great astronomers, who made significant contributions. Aryabhatta, the greatest among them, was born at Pataliputra in 476 A.D. In his well known work *Aryabhattiya* he asserted the theory of the rotation of the earth on its own axis and indicated the cause of solar and lunar eclipses. The other astronomers of the ancient period were Varahamihira, Brahma Gupta and Bhaskaracharya. Their works on astronomy were called the *siddhantas.* They deal with the movement of planets, eclipses and measurement of times. There was an astronomical observatory at Ujjain in Central India. The astronomers worked out a solar calendar with lunar months, with provision for periodical adjustments.

Ancient Indians understood the importance of arithmetic. The *Yajur Veda Samhita* and the *Pancha Vimsa Samhita* deal with this subject. The numbers are given in ascending decimal table—as *eka* for one, *dasa* for ten *sata* for hundred, *sahasra* for thousand and so on. Aryabhatta and Varahamihira wrote treatises on mathematics and discussed mathematical problems including zero.

Medical science was generally referred to as Ayurveda. It was intended for the preservation of the life of human beings, animals and plants. The orderly functioning of the body was explained in terms of the tridoshas-*vata, pitta* and *kapha.* When these are deranged, there would follow malfunctioning of the body. Among the scientists who made contributions to the growth of Ayurveda, were Charaka, Vaghbhata and Sisruta. While the *Charaka Samhita* gives importance to internal medicine, the *Sisruta Samhita* to surgery. The accounts given in the works give an idea that the ancient Indians maintained their own dispensaries, made medicine out of herbs and metallic compounds, and performed major operations like amputation.

Chemistry made great progress in the second and third centuries A.D. It was closely allied to *alchemy* or *rasa vidva* and to metallurgy. The word rasa meant mercury, which together with sulphur and mica were central to the chemical thought of India. The people of the age knew the processing of steel and exported iron products to foreign lands. Nagarjuna was a chemist as well as a metallurgist.

The Muslim conquests strengthened the contacts of India with the Arab countries and Central Asia. In consequence Indian sciences greatly influenced the Asiatic countries. The Arabs copied the Indian numerals and translated the works of the Indian scientists into Arabic. Through the Arab world the Indian ideas and conceptions migrated to Europe.

The great achievements made by the west in modern times gave impetus to the growth of sciences and technology in India. The English introduced western sciences to this country. In the mean time the Indian scientists made significant contributions. Among them are J. C. Bose, C. V. Raman and H. J. Bhabha. Born in 1858 at Mymensigh, now in Bangladesh, Bose displayed scientific talents even in his younger days. Encouraged by his Jesuit teacher, he continued his studies at Calcutta and then at Cambridge. He was appointed as Professor of Physics at Presidency College, Calcutta. The area of his interest was radio communication but subsequently he turned to plant life. As the result of his experiments in the responses of plants to such stimuli as light, sound and electricity, he asserted that plants like animals, adjusted to change through 'inherited memory of the past'. In 1917 he founded the Bose Research Institute at Calcutta. C. V. Raman (1887–1970) was a great scientist. Born at Erode, he studied at Presidency College, Madras and did his research at Calcutta, Cambridge and California institute of Technology. As a result, he formulated the theories of 'modular equation' and 'continued fractions'. His discovery of what is known as *Raman Effect* influenced later works on molecular structure. In 1930 he was awarded Nobel prize. H. J. Bhabha (1909–1966) a nuclear scientist, was born at Bombay. He took his doctorate from Cambridge and worked with Niels Bohr on the studies that led to the discovery of the

quantum theory. After his return to India he did his research on cosmic rays. He served as Director of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and in 1955 as Chairman of the U. N. Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy.

After Independence, India has recorded great progress in science and technology and has succeeded in using science for the welfare of the people. For example, as a result of the joint venture of the International Rice Research Institute, and the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, the Green Revolution has been effected. By this revolution it is sought to put an end to food shortages on a permanent basis. Similarly as a result of the fruitful co-operation between the Indian Dairy Development Corporation and the World Bank, a Dairy Development Project at Anand, pioneered in milk production and distribution. Inspired by the success of this venture, 'White Revolution' has been launched in various states. To exploit the untold wealth of the seas with particular reference to fish, efforts were made to launch the 'Blue Revolution' in progressively building up a deep-sea fishing fleet and the promotion of better storage facilities.

IX. INDIAN RENAISSANCE

Renaissance, as generally understood, refers to the revival of interest in the classical literature of ancient Greece and Rome. The spirit of enquiry, criticism and rationalism, created by it, led to reassessment of traditional values, beginning of reformation, geographical discoveries, destruction of feudalism and rise of nation states. In India the renaissance was not so sweeping in its character, as it was in Europe yet it led to a new assessment of religious conceptions and social customs and an intellectual awakening.

Several factors contributed to the renaissance in India. Among them were: the British conquest of India exposed the defects in the Indian civilization, the western education exercised a subtle influence on Indian thought and political unity gave a common sense of purpose. A mercantile company, that came for trade, conquered a magnificent empire and asserted its imperial sway. The Christian missionaries preached their religion and gained converts. The railways, telegraph and the other achievements of western science, which the new masters introduced in the country, revealed the inadequacy of the oriental civilisation in certain respects. Added to these the westerners considered themselves as of superior race and treated the people of the land, even those who by tradition considered themselves as high born, with utter contempt. Exposition of the defects of the oriental civilisation and humiliation suffered at the hands of the aliens led the intellectuals to a new assessment of the cultural values and a search for ideas, which could be employed in their attempt to face the challenge. Secondly, the English introduced the western system of education. They founded schools and colleges on European model and introduced the study of European literature, arts and sciences. The fatalistic people, who had been more concerned with their imagined welfare in the other world rather than the vast opportunities in the present world, experienced through this channel the salutary influence of liberal ideas. The spirit of enquiry and scepticism, that came in its wake, led the people to doubt the acceptability of beliefs, handed down to posterity through tradition and superstition. Added to these the Indians

developed a new faith in the national unity of the country. The foreigners brought political unity to the land and introduced a uniform administration, rule of law, better means of communication and a common language in English. The people belonging to remote regions found it possible to meet at a common place, exchange their views and thereby experience the influence of the ideal of national unity. The unity of purpose instilled a new sense of purpose among the people.

Religious Awakening

The organisation of a number of cultural societies ushered in a religious awakening of great magnitude. Among them the Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj, Rama Krishna Mission and the Theosophical Society were the most important. While some of them followed a conservative line advocating a going back to the real and imagined glories of the past, others promoted a liberal policy aimed at the inculcation of what was good in the East and the West.

Raja Rammohan Roy, founder of the Brahma Samaj, developed an aversion for the traditional beliefs ever since he witnessed the tragedy of his brother's widow, who was forced to perform *sati*. A noted scholar in several languages and the Hindu scriptures, he came under the influence of liberalism of the west. He preached the oneness of God and condemned the worship of images and the attendant rituals. In support of his views, he published extracts taken from the Sastras. As a liberal thinker, he attacked the social evils of *sati*, polygamy and child marriage and advocated widow re-marriage, female education, freedom of the press, rights of the tenants in zamindari lands and introduction of the western system of education. These progressive views made him the Prophet of New India. To his work is attributed many of the reformist movements in modern India. In 1828 he founded an organisation which became the Brahma Samaj. A temple built in 1830 was thrown open to all people for worship. Brahma Samaj popularised his teachings of one supreme being, prayer as the sole means of self purification and eradication of the evils in the caste system. Besides it championed the ideals of personal freedom and social equality which in effect were alien to the Indian Society.

In Maharashtra under the inspiration of Keshab Chandra Sen there was founded in 1867 the Prarthana Samaj. Unlike the Brahma Samaj, it accepted the diversity of Hindu gods, worship of images and orthodox form of worship. However, like the Brahma Samajists, its followers worked for the reform of Hindu society and the abolition of social evils. They favoured intercaste dining and marriage and uplift of the oppressed communities. Among the members of this organisation the most famous were Justice Ranade and Gopala Krishna Gokhale. Due to their efforts were founded the Deccan Education Society, Widow Re-marriage Association and Depressed Classes-Mission.

Dayananda Saraswathi founded the Arya Samaj in 1875. In contrast to Brahma Samaj, the Arya Samaj opposed all foreign influences and suggested return to the ways of the past, sought to trace all kinds of virtues and the scientific concepts in the Hindu literature. In consequence, the impact of Arya Samaj upon the society was mixed; it was reactionary as well as progressive. As a reactionary movement it sought to read too much in the Vedas and declared its opposition to other religious systems. As a progressive movement, it advocated social reform, acceptance of monotheism, removal of caste restrictions and eradication of disabilities put on women. It also inculcated patriotism and roused the national consciousness of the people.

Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky founded the Theosophical Society at New York in 1875. At the invitation of Swami Dayananda Saraswathi the head quarters were shifted to Adyar, Madras, in 1886. The Society aimed at the promotion of universal brotherhood without any distinction of race, colour or sex and at the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science. Mrs. Annie Besant, an Irish woman, who made India her home, joined the society. She promoted a system of education, based upon India's cultural traditions, founded the Home Rule League and championed the cause of India's freedom.

The Ramakrishna Mission, known after Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, served as the most influential agency of Hindu renaissance. Paramahamsa held the view that the same God

was worshipped under different names and different religions were different paths leading to the same goal. Narendranath Dutta, afterwards Swami Vivekananda, who became his disciple, founded the Ramakrishna Mission and popularised the teaching of his master. To him world was not maya or illusion but a stage in the evolution of mankind to progress. The Ramakrishna Mission devoted itself to the spiritual development of man, spread reformist ideas, started educational institutions and undertook social welfare activity.

The awakening among the Muslims was limited in degree, for they did not seek to take advantage of any of the political or educational systems introduced by the alien English, who deprived them of their princely status. Gradually they understood their folly and tried to rectify it. Syed Ahamad Khan started the Aligarh Movement and founded the Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College, which grew into the Aligarh Muslim University. Mirza Gulam Ahmad founded the Ahmadiya Movement. These organisations aimed at bringing about a resurgence among the Muslims, at countering the influences of Hindu and Christian missions and wanted to instil nationalism among the Mohammadans.

Educational and Social Reform

The period witnessed the advent of great changes in educational system and social custom. In the beginning, the British government encouraged the revival of Indian learning. Warren Hastings founded the Madrasa at Calcutta, Sir William Jones the Asiatic Society of Bengal and Jonathan Duncan a Sanskrit College at Varanasi. The Christian Missionaries opened schools and introduced the study of western languages and western subjects. Raja Rammohan Roy demanded the introduction of the Western System of education to enlighten the masses. Thomas Macaulay, President of the Committee of Public Instruction during the administration of William Bentinck, denounced the classical learning of India and advocated the popularization of the western learning. The Despatch of Sir Charles Wood, President of the Board of Control, in 1854 incorporated these views and outlined an educational system for British India. In consequence, a department of education was

created in each of the provinces and a co-ordinated system of education from the primary to the higher stages was evolved.

Female education received special attention from the beginning, but its progress was slow. Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, a Brahma Samajist, established nearly forty schools for girls while Sasipada Banerji and Pandita Ramabai opened homes for the widows with a view to train them in small scale industries and to enable them to make a living. The homes for the widows and colleges for female education extended opportunities to women to take up professional and higher learning.

The British government entertained an idea that the wise method of ensuring its political domination was to leave the other-wordly minded masses well engaged in the performance of rites and ceremonies to the extent of diverting their attention. The English accordingly either adopted a policy of non-interference or even encouraged them in sticking to their customs. But the magnitude of social rigours was such that it forced them to depart from this policy. The Indian reformers too demanded governmental action to eradicate the social inequities. In consequence regulations were enforced to prevent infanticide, to ban and suppress human sacrifice and sati. The orthodox sections of the society viewed these reforms with suspicion but failed to organise any formidable opposition.

Changes in the social structure too were visible. Because of the emergence of new economic forces and individualism the joint family system became less popular. The Sarada Act, named after its sponsor Rai Saheb Sarada, imposed restrictions upon early marriage. The Servants of India Society founded in 1905 by Gopala Krishna Gokhale, condemned caste distinctions. Newspapers in Indian languages and in English appeared in large number and they exercised a salutory influence upon the common people.

Art and Literature

The English scholars attempted a systematic study of the history and architecture of India. James Prinsep deciphered the Brahmi script with the help of Indo-Greek coins and John Marshall carried out excavations in the Indus valley. Fergus-

son and Cunningham attempted a scientific study of arts and architecture. The Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, enacted during the administration of Lord Curzon, provided for the preservation of the architectural glories, bequeathed to posterity. As a result of these developments there came a new interest in the study of history and a pride in the heritage of the land. Renaissance in fine arts made progress side by side. To begin with, western techniques were adopted for the presentation of Indian themes, whether it was in painting or sculpture and later on Indian techniques were followed. This contributed to a renewed study of Indian art in its varied forms.

The western influence helped in the growth of languages and literature. The Christian missionaries in their attempt to reach the common people studied Indian languages, translated the scriptures and promoted the growth of literature. A remarkable development of the period was the beginning of prose writing. The plays of Shakespeare inspired the Tamil scholars. The *Manonmaniam* of Sundaram Pillai represented an adaptation of *The Secret way of Lytton.* The *Nandan Charithiram* was the first verse drama in Tamil. Suryanarayana Sastri sought to combine the features of Western and Indian plays in his *Rupavati and Kalavati.* Subramania Bharati (1882-1921) composed patriotic songs, took interest in western technology, worked for the emancipation of women and took part in national movement. Viresalingam Pantulu wrote the first novel in Telugu. Dramas were written on the traditional and simple life of the people. Ravi Varma Tampi composed stories for kathakali dramas, Kerala Varma wrote *Mayura Sandesam* in imitation of Kalidasa's *Meghaduta* and Vallathol Narayana Menon composed several short poems. Periyar E. V. Ramaswami was a rationalist who in his writings attacked the evils of Hindu society, condemned caste system and promoted a Dravidian movement.

The North Indian languages too achieved phenominal progress. Bengali led the other languages of the North in the composition of novel, essay, short story, drama and simple prose. Raja Rammohan Roy, Bankim Chandra Chatterji, Ramesh Chandra Dutt and Rabindranath Tagore contributed in a great

deal to the growth of modern literature in Bengali. Hindi developed as a modern language during this period. Dayananda Saraswathi wrote works in forcible Hindi. Bharatendu Harischandra composed numerous essays and dramas. John Gilchirst wrote Urdu dictionary and Grammar. Muhammad Hussain of Lahore simplified the composition of Urdu poetry, while Ghalib of Delhi promoted prose writing. Marathi and Punjabi prose of the modern times developed due to western influence. Pandit Man Singh wrote poems and short stories in Punjabi, while Keshavasuta contributed to the growth of modern Marathi poetry. The poems and essays of Lalsankar were famous among the works in Gujarathi. These developments synchronised with the transition of Indian languages from stagnation to progress.

The Indian press grew into prominence during this period of social awakening. Hickey started a weekly called *Bengal Gazette* in 1780. It was followed by the *Calcutta Gazette*, the *Indian World* and the *Madras Gazette*. Though they were in English, these issues gained a wide currency. Indian pioneers too took interest in the establishment of newspapers. Among them were the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, *Indian Mirror*, *The Kesari* and *The Hindu*. Because of governmental restriction and suppression, the Indian press experienced repeated ordeals, yet it played a significant role in the spread of new ideas.

The rise of nationalism marked a culmination, as the political end, of the awakening ushered in by the renaissance. A new interest in classical works convinced the masses of the cultural unity of the people, living in the remote parts of the country. The historical works, composed by various scholars, too revealed the steady march of the country to political unification. Through western education the Indians learned the literature of rationalism, the works of the great thinkers like Mill, Burke, Locke, Voltaire, Adam Smith and Rousseau. Newspapers and periodicals, that appeared in different languages, carried the message of the revolutionary movements to the people. The reformers of the period instilled a new faith in the culture of the past and gave a new hope for the future. In consequence, the Indian national movement marked an aspect of the renaissance. In this respect, it struck a parallel with similar developments in history.

X. INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO WORLD THOUGHT

Located in South Asia, India occupies a central position among the countries of the world. It is situated on the high way between the East and the West by the sea. Beyond its northern borders is the huge land mass of Asia, inhabited by diverse races of people and beyond the southern shores are high seas and rich islands. The geographical location has rendered India a meeting ground of cultural influences and enabled her to spread her own culture abroad, to the East and the West, to the interior territories and the nearby islands.

From ancient times India developed a distinct culture of her own. This found manifestation in the civilizations, from the Dravidian to the Aryan and from the past to the present. It is possible to distinguish different cultural areas in India but essentially Indian culture developed a unity of its own. Interposed by no insuperable mountains or unfordable rivers, peoples and ideas moved freely from region to region. Many of the customs of the Dravidians were assimilated with the Aryan. During the period that followed there poured in invaders and colonists from Central Asia and West Asia. The English and the French came as merchants and conquerors. In the years of invasion and spoliation there came slaughter and destruction but ultimately the cultural currents acted and reacted so as to develop a composite culture.

It is possible to identify certain distinctive features of the Indian culture. Firstly, it is the religious element. Religion is so interwoven with worldly matters that law, literature and art are often considered sacred. Most of the works composed in local languages are usually devotional in character and only in modern times a departure from such tradition is attempted. Architecture was made to serve the needs of religion. Secondly, the caste system, village community and joint family supplied the social bases of civilization. Society was regulated not by the free play of any competitive force but by status, tending to continuity rather than to development. Political instability caused by the rise and fall of empires was balanced by social stability associated with economic stagnation.

Certain characteristics distinguish the Indian culture from the Western culture. The Indians called their culture by the

term 'manavadharma', which stood for human culture. It was intended to serve the needs of all human beings irrespective of age, sex or colour, and to have a universal appeal. Besides, it is based upon a thorough understanding of the nature of man and his relations with other beings in the universe and with the universe as a whole. Added to these, the power of assimilation displayed by the Indian culture was so remarkable that seldom was it possible to find an equal parallel in other areas of the world. Different races with their own cultural traditions entered India as conquerors but they were absorbed into the stream of society and their culture was gradually assimilated. The Muslims remained apart from the Hindus, being separated by religious beliefs and social customs. The Hindus, in self-defence tightened caste restrictions and retired into self imposed isolation. Yet mutual influences did not lack, for they were reflected in the evolution of a common language in Urdu, fusion of the Hindu and Persian forms of painting and acceptance of the architectural style like the arch, the dome and the minaret. After the advent of the whites, arts and customs in India were powerfully moulded by the European systems.

Diverse agencies contributed to the spread of Indian culture abroad. Among them were militarists, missionaries, traders, workers and gipsies. Ambitious chieftains and adventurous rulers moved beyond the traditional borders of the country to establish kingdoms and colonies abroad. Buddhist missionaries visited foreign territories to spread their religion. Merchants and workers, established their settlements in the western regions as well as in the island territories. The gypsies freely moved about from country to country. In modern times the travellers and writers have also contributed to the popularization of elements of Indian culture in foreign lands.

Spread of Buddhism

From India Buddhism spread to Central Asia, China, Japan, West Asia and to South East Asia. The early missionaries sent by Emperor Asoka visited Central Asia and Ceylon. In subsequent times, Kanishka too sent Buddhist missions to foreign lands. These marked the beginning of the long succession of scholars and pilgrims who travelled between

India and China for a thousand years. The early travel routes passed across the Himalayas and the Gobi desert. As the dangers on the way seemed many, another route was found across the seas between India and Indo-China.

All the details about the missions and travels by the pilgrims are not known. However according to the available evidences Kashyappa Matanga who reached China in 67 A.D. led the first mission which consisted of several saintly men. He carried with him manuscripts in Sanskrit. These missioneries learned the Chinese language and settled down in Lo Yang province. It is pointed out that at one time during the sixth century A.D. there were more than 10,000 Indian families and 3,000 Buddhist monks in this province. Kumarajiva, who went to China in 401 A.D. was a prolific writer, who wrote about forty-seven works including translation of that of Nagarjuna into Chinese. Jinagupta, another great Buddhist, went to China during the sixth century A.D. He learned the Chinese language and drew around him many Chinese disciples, one of whom was an emperor of the Tang dynasty. His translations into Chinese included thirty seven Sanskrit works.

As the result of missionary activities Buddhism spread far and wide. When the Chinese pilgrims reached India they found Buddhist settlements in Central Asia. Buddhism reached an advanced stage, when Christianity rose in Palestine. It is believed that some of the Christian practices like meditation and fasting were copied from Buddhism.

From China pilgrims visited India too. Among them the most noted were Fa-hien, Hiven Tsang and I-tsing. Fa-hien, a disciple of Kumarajiva in China, visited India during the Gupta period and studied in the University at Pataliputra. Hiven Tsang travelled all over the country, when Sri Harsha ruled over North India. He spent years in Nalanda University as professor of Asian civilization and became Vice Chancellor. His work *Si-yu-ki* or the Record of the Western Kingdom makes a fascinating reading and it furnishes much information about the country, I-tsing reached India by sea in 671 A.D. and he studied at Nalanda University, learned Sanskrit and carried with him numerous texts to China.

Buddhism spread in China during a period when that country was passing through difficult times. To the people who were suffering from internal disorders, flood, drought and epidemics, it had a great appeal. Subsequently there followed a period of reaction. The Chinese scholars attributed their misery to the acceptance of an alien faith. Besides, the worship of God—the Buddha of Mahayana Buddhism—was something strange to the Chinese tradition. The result was that the Chinese rejected Buddhism gradually and turned to Neo-Confucianism. Therefore it cannot be asserted that Indian influence upon China was of so great a magnitude as it was projected.

Establishment of Colonies

Enterprizing merchants and daring adventurers moved to far off areas and founded colonies. Accounts furnished in Sanskrit inscriptions, Arab writings and Chinese narratives indicate the establishments of Indian colonies in Burma, Malaya, Indonesia, Sium, Indo-China, Central Asia and North Africa. Some of the early Indian settlers managed to reach as far as Taiwan, the Philippines and Madagascar. Nevertheless the principal area of colonization was South East Asia. Indian historians refer to this region as Greater India but this is resented by the intellectuals of South East Asia. It appears that there were four important ways of colonization during the period between the first century A.D. and the tenth century A.D. Names given to the new colonies were often Indian—thus Cambodia from Kambuja, an Indian town, and Java from Yavadwipa, a Sanskrit word which meant Island of Millet. Subsequently, the powers of South India, of Kalinga, Andhradesa and Tamilnadu, turned pioneers of imperialism in this region. They established their imperial sway overseas and founded commercial and colonial settlements in Ceylon, Burma and the Indies.

The settlements of the Indians grew in power and developed into maritime empires, some of which lasted for more than thousand years. Two Hindu kingdoms emerged in Indo-China. One of them, Champa embraced most of Vietnam of the present day, while the other, Kambuja included Cambodia, Cochin-China, Laos, Siam and parts of

Burma and Malaya. In the Malay peninsula was founded the Silendra Empire, which included the Malay region the islands of Java, Sumatra, Borneo and Bali. During the eleventh century the powerful Cholas presented a threat to its greatness. Rajendra Chola conquered a lagre part of the Empire, after which the Silendra power declined. On the ruins there emerged the Majapahit Empire in the island of Java. Another kingdom was Malacca. A ruler of Malacca embraced Islam, which greatly helped the spread of this religion in South East Asia. A Tamil kindom called Kandi flourished in the northern region of Ceylon.

During the age of these powers Indian culture penetrated to South East Asia and powerfully affected language, arts and architecture. Buddhism and Hinduism were the popular religions. Sanskrit was a prominent language, which influenced the local languages. The words sukarno is derived from 'su-karna' and swayamvara, which indicated a game, from a similar word. State ceremonies were Indian and were conducted in Sanskrit. The administration and jurisprudence were copied from India. Under the impact of Hinduism and Buddhism, temples and monasteries were constructed in large number. As noted earlier Indian art and architecture derived their basic character from the ideals associated with religion and philosophy. As religion went from India the basic conceptions of art too influenced these regions. The famous dances of Java and Bali were derived from Indian sources, while the alphabet of the language in Cambodia bears South Indian character.

The influence of Indian is seen most marked in the monuments of art and architecture. At Borabudur in Java the life story of the Buddha is carved in stone. The stupa, situated on the summit of a hill. consists of a series of terraced images of the Buddha. These images and sculptures represent the finest examples of Indo-Javaneese art. At other places there are reliefs reproducing legends of Vishnu, Rama and Krishna. The great temple of Angkor Vat and the monuments at Angkor Thom indicate a fusion of Indian and Khmer styles of architecture. Around the temple at Angkor Vat is a vast area of architectural ruins with artificial lakes, canals and bridges.

Indian culture spread to the north as well as to the west. The Kushans who had their capital at Peshawar occupied the central Asian provinces and the Indians settled down at Khotan. The excavations conducted by Aurel Stein have resulted in the discovery of the ruins of monasteries and images of Indian gods. With the Persian Empire as the link, the Indian culture spread to the western region too. The Indian princes sent emissaries to the Roman Empire and promoted trade. The discovery of regular currents of the monsoon in the Indian Ocean in the first century A.D. helped the regularisation of India's trade with the European countries. Alexandria in Egypt developed into a great emporium when the Indians had their trading settlements. It is believed that the Malabar teak imported into Palestine was used towards the construction of the Great Temple at Jerusalem by King Solomon. The Indian goods like pearls and silk were in so great demand in the Roman Empire that the historian Pliny was moved at the loss of gold and silver, sent in exchange.

Migration of Fables

Perhaps the most remarkable phenomenon was the migration of fables. They were carried by the wandering tribes like the gipsies also called as Egyptians, by the traders from Greece and *Byzantium* and by the Mongolian invaders of eastern Europed As early as the sixth century B C Aesop's Fables were known in India. By the same period the *Panchatantra* was translate. into Pehlevi language in Persia and was entitled Kalila and Dimma, from the names of two jackals in one of the stories. From this work was made a version in Arabic from which the stories found their way to Europe. A German version was one of the earliest of the printed books. It affected Greek literature and was translated into Dutch, Danish and Icelandic languages. Sir Thomas North, using an Italian translations, introduced the fables to Elizabethan England, and from him Shakespeare borrowed the two apologues of the Three Caskets and the pound of Flesh. Max Muller traces the story of Perretta to an Indian source. Perretta, carrying her milk-pot on her head to the market, has day dreams of selling her milk, buying a hundred eggs, selling the chickens, and bartering them for a cow and a calf. The call kicks its legs and so does *Peretta.* The milk is spilt and Perretta only hopes, she may escape a beating from her husband. In the Indian version, Perretta is a stupid Brahman, who has cooked a mess of rice, which he hopes to sell at a profit and thinks he will eventually marry a wealthy

woman. He dreams of giving his wife a beating, and waving his stick breaks the pot and the rice is spilt. Another example is found in the story of Cinderella who is Suvarnadevi, the Hindu princess, who dropped her slipper into a lake. It was found by a fisherman who presented it to the prince Ugrabahu, who falls in love with the unknown wearer and employs all means to trace her. In fact the *Arabian Nights* contain a large number of tales derived from Hindu, Greek and Persian sources. These stories found their way to Spain from where to European main land.

Work of the Arabs

After the Arabs settled down in Sind by 712 A.D. they came into contact with the Indian civilization. They learned from India sciences, mathematics, medicine, astronomy, philosophy, literature and arts. In fact they laid the foundations of their cultural greatness between 750A.D. and 850A.D. largely with the aid of the ideas obtained from India. The Hindu numerals and the decimal system were copied in the Arab countries. The Hindu astronomy became popular. The noted Arab astronomer Abu Mashar studied Indian astronomy at Varanasi. The Arab scholars who studied in India served under the Caliphs of Baghdad. They carried with them the works of Charaka and Brahma Gupta, which were translated into Arabic. During the Caliphate of Harun-al-Raschid Hindu physicians were employed in his court. From the Arab world Indian arts and sciences migrated to Europe. Havell rightly observes. It was not until the Muslim invaders had made India their home that Islam took its place as a civilizing power in the world. All the scientific elements which formed Arab scholarship were in the eighth century borrowed from India. The knowledge of chemistry, mathematics, medicine and astronomy which the Arabs disseminated in Europe was almost wholly borrowed from Indian sources. The sword of Islam and imperialism of the Arabs helped the sciences of the East in their trend westwards to Europe. This served as a powerful factor that contributed to the Renaissance in Europe.

Cultural Impact upon the West

In modern times India exercised her influence through the indirect channel of European commerce and imperialism. It was the determination of the Portuguese to break the monopoly held by the Venetian and Genoese merchants in eastern trade which led them to undertake arduous explorations, culminating in the discovery of the Cape route to the Indies. This momen-

tous development excited an interest in geographical explorations, eastern markets, colonisation and the writing of travel accounts.

The journal of Sir Thomas Roe describes his audience with Emperor Jahangir: 'High on a gallery, with a canopy over him and a carpet before him, sat in great and barbarous state the Great Mogul.' This seems to have inspired Milton's picture of Satan High on a throne of royal state, which far outshone the wealth of Ormuz and of Ind'. The Jesuits learnt Indian languages, particularly Sanskrit and translated the Yajur Veda into French which made a deep impression on Voltaire. Max Muller translated the Rig Veda into English and edited the Sacred Books of the East, which enabled the western world to have a first hand account of the Hindu, Zoroastrain, Buddhist, Muslim and Chinese scriptures. In Germany Ruckert revealed the beauties of Indian poetry and Goethe was immensely attracted by the *Sakunthala* of Kalidasa. Shelly, Wordsworth and Carlyle were influenced by the Hindu philosophy. The Indian influence upon the Transcendental movement in America, which started mainly as a protest against New England Puritanism, was marked. Emersons, its prophet, studied the ancient scriptures of India. Thomas Moore wrote his famous *Lalla Rookh*, a series of stories recited by a young poet to the daughter of Emperor Aurangzeb in order to beguile the tedium of a journey from Delhi to Kashmir. She was going to Kashmir to become the bride of the Prince of Bokhara, but on the way she succumbs to the charms of the handsome young bard. The party arrives at its destination; the bride goes to meet her betrothed, and he turns out to be none other than the young story teller himself.

A movement which affected European thought very strongly in the later Victorian period was theosophy. Madame Blavatsky, a Russian, joined hands with an American, Colonel Olcott, in evolving the theory that world is under the guidance of a hierarchy of Mahatmas or masters whose incarnations were Krishna, the Buddha and Jesus. Mrs. Annie Besant, the successor of Blavatsky turned an upholder of Indian nationalism. Under the influence of theosophy a large number of people in America and Europe acquired some ideas about *karma*, rebirth and other Hindu doctrines.

Among the leaders who exercised a powerful influence were Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma

Gandhi. Vivekananda attended a Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893 and later founded the Ramakrishna Mission with a view to wean its followers from greed, sensuality and materialism of the west by means of the ancient truths of Hinduism. Tagore played a unique part in the spiritual and cultural renaissance of modern India and his *Gitanjali* and *Sadhana* exercised considerable influence upon contemporary thought. Mahatma Gandhi infused a new spirit into the national struggle for freedom by the application of the ancient Hindu doctrine of *ahimsa* or non-violence. The new approach enunciated by Gandhiji had exercised much influence upon Europe, Africa and America, though it had its own critics too.

In the field of art the influence of India abroad is considerable. Foreign visiters like Sir Thomas Roe were impressed by Mughal miniature paintings. During the eighteenth century European painters went to India and painted pictures of scenery and monuments. Thomas and William Daniell prepared a collection of paintings entitled Oriental Scenery, which was responsible for creating an impression about the romantic East which was widely reflected in contemporary literature. A taste for oriental items like Kashmir shawls and embroidered bed spreads became fashionable. European visitors were impressed with the Indian style of architecture and made attempts to adopt certain forms, but the influence was not considerable.

It is too much to assert that India holds the balance in the world wide competition and cold war between the rival ideologies-communism and capitalism. Yet it cannot be denied that India is a factor in international affairs. The concept of non-violence and non-cooperation had been applied by the Indian tribes of U.S.A. in their struggle against American aggressions, but in practice it failed. India on the other hand had proved its efficacy in the course of her struggle for freedom. To the minorities in different countries particularly the Black Americans this had a tremendous appeal. Martin Luther King had established that this could be wielded to gain justice to the racial minorities, oppressed by the majorities.

Experiment in democracy too has excited wide interest. The periodical elections, party system and village communities represented the working of democracy on a gigantic scale. This had influenced the evolution of democratic institutions in several of Asiatic and African countries.

Wrapper printed at :
FERMUN OFFSET, MADRAS-600 001.